

The ROSICRUCIAN FORUM

A PRIVATE PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS OF AMORC,
THE ROSICRUCIAN ORDER

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LITTLE BY LITTLE

Little by little the rock wears down,
Standing in wind and rain;
Little by little our faults wear down,
Exposed to sorrow or pain.

Little by little the baby grows—
Then one day we see a man;
Little by little our wisdom grows—
Each day of the full life span.

Little by little a thought at a time
Onward and upward we go;
Though slowly it seems, a cell at a time,
Yes, this is the way we grow.

—Dorothy Thomson, F. R. C.

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FOR MEMBERS ONLY

Greetings!



UNITY OF MINDS

Dear Fratres and Sorores:

Harmony in world society, more commonly referred to as peace, requires unity of action. This is not meant to imply that peoples throughout the world would need to conform to the same ways of living in every respect. The differences in culture, religion and economic resources, would prevent such a completely integrated activity of the whole human race. The desired harmony would necessitate, however, that certain activities, both physical and mental, be indulged in by the peoples of all races so as to provide a common relationship.

Every conscious, that is, volitional action has behind it a motivating concept or thought. Consequently, for true co-operation among the diversified races and nationalities, there must needs be a basic collective thought. Several world organizations, prompted by the ideal of peace, are seeking to establish the groundwork for such basic thought. In the main, they advance political ideologies, theories of government, which obviously have not as yet been universally accepted. It would appear that, before anything positive, as an abstract theory or principle, can be received by all peoples, primary psychological barriers existing between them must be removed. The preparatory work for this unity of minds, which is to result in co-ordinated action, is, therefore, of a negative kind.

Perhaps the greatest psychological barrier between peoples, both in small and large groups, is that of *suspicion*. When one doubts the reality of what he perceives or otherwise comes to realize, he is then suspicious. It is patent that the content of suspicion is one of confusion. There is a considerable difference, however, between false judgment and suspicion. One whom time and subsequent events prove to have made a wrong decision was nevertheless not in confusion when he did so. Further, if one had any certainty that conditions or circumstances were different from their appearance, he would display that assurance

in his subsequent action. The *suspicious* person is one who always manifests uncertainty.

Suspicion is not caused by false perception. It is not that an individual actually hears or sees, for example, a reality differently than does the confident person. Suspicion is not caused by imperfect sense faculties or illusion. Rather, suspicion is the consequence of being unable to relate a particular experience to our personal knowledge. Suspicion is not a matter of unfamiliarity but of relationship. There are many things which we encounter in our daily lives that are new and different to us. They evoke our curiosity, perhaps even our caution, but we are not always suspicious of them. Whenever the unfamiliar can be associated in the mind with some other reality or manifestation or with a purpose, it assumes a positive character to us. The relationship into which we fit it may, of course, be erroneous. However, we will then either accept and utilize it, disregard it or fear it. That which we suspect does not suggest a definite relationship to other realities. If the suggestion were positive, that is, full enough to reveal certain connections, then there would be no cause for suspicion. Confusion is engendered because what is experienced displays no definite relationship to other experiences, and yet seems possible of being other than what it is.

Ignorance is the greatest contributor to the psychological state of suspicion. Through knowledge or expanded experience, one comes to perceive underlying causes which relate realities like links in a chain. Phenomena do not appear to be so isolated. Parallels can be seen as existing between things and events. The thoughtful and educated person is, therefore, more conscious of what we shall call the *probability of relationship* to existing reality, no matter how new and startling may be the particular which is immediately experienced. A person, for example, may not be certain whether what he experiences is a natural phenomenon or a supernatural one. Such, however, must not be confused

with the probability to which we refer. This probability of relationship is founded upon our recognizing, in what is experienced, one or more elements *which do exist* in other realities. Therefore, it would be logical to assume that the reality might be of those other things. To the ignorant and suspicious person, the reality, as we have said, stands alone. It is not sufficiently comprehensible in itself and such a person cannot perceive in it any elements which have a definite relationship to anything else.

We know that intelligent and learned persons often speak of being suspicious of the motives of another. This type of suspicion is actually caused, in most instances, by an attempt at deliberate deception. The intelligent person, in such cases as the example given, is not as suspicious as he really is *cautious*. He sees the relationship between the apparent conduct of the individual and a probable misrepresented motive. Consequently, there are to him two realities possible in the behavior of the individual and he prudently determines as to which he should react.

In most nations of the world, the political ideology is closely aligned with the prevailing religion. The precepts of the political theories are frequently justified by the doctrinal precepts of religion, the implication being that the social and political ideas are more or less divinely inspired. This is particularly noticeable in what are referred to as the *Christian* and *Islamic* nations. We frequently refer to our "Christian" system of government. In endeavoring to win the collaboration of other peoples in putting into practice our theories of state, we often involve them in our religious traditions and concepts. This immediately arouses suspicion of our proposals among the citizens of those nations who are not Christian and who, in fact, may be specifically unacquainted with the Christian dogma. The intense rivalry between religions, the desire for each to be supreme and often to exercise control over state affairs, warrants this suspicion so often displayed toward an attempt at a unity of minds in political realms.

Complex ideas and customs, if not thoroughly explained to peoples, arouse at times the psychological barrier of suspicion. The realities of the proposals are confused. The mind then cannot see the true relationship

of what is being presented. The doubt as to the identity, as to the inherent nature of the reality, causes confusion and a reluctance to enter into an acceptance of it. The confusion of suspicion is unlike the confusion of perception. One may not see an object clearly, yet he does not necessarily mistrust it. With suspicion, however, the confusion causes a mistrust of that which evokes it. The conceived factor of deception, intentional or adventitious, enters into the circumstances. When one mistrusts, it is but another step to hatred.

It is essential, therefore, for each nation to sincerely make, at diplomatic levels, an inquiry into those causes of suspicion which are had of it by other peoples. What is true is what appears *real*. Where there is suspicion, it is because the reality remains uncertain. Consequently, the beneficial influence of its truth is lost. Suspicion is an intangible but nefarious film that insulates human minds one from the other.

Fraternally,

RALPH M. LEWIS,

Imperator.

Young People and AMORC

A frater rises to address our Forum. He queries: "Why are there not younger groups in Rosicrucian membership? Why can we not have more members between the ages of twenty and thirty years? What needs to be done to arouse their interest?"

We will presume that the frater is quite familiar with the existence of our Junior Order of Torch Bearers. This body is intended to appeal to children from six years of age up to and including youths of eighteen years. We have, therefore, by such a means, not neglected our Rosicrucian youth. Below the ages mentioned, of course, are also the activities of the Child Culture Institute. What then, as the frater has asked, of the young men and women from the age of twenty-one years? Why are there not more of this age group, and what is being done to interest them in the Rosicrucian Order?

The minimum age for membership in the Rosicrucian Order is twenty-one years. This is qualified at times by a special dispensation, as for example, if one is of an age younger than twenty-one but is in the armed forces. For the adult members, the subjects

of the teachings as extended in each Degree are the same. There are no special presentations of the doctrines of the Order, no adaptations for any age group. The teachings are prepared for the *matured mind*, for the one having mystical and philosophical inclinations. To make other types of appeal might result in the attraction of other minds, but their interest probably would not be commensurate with what the Order strives to accomplish. As a result, the Order would have to convert these other minds to the mystical and philosophical levels of the Order. In most cases such persons would not be ready for the full teachings until the average age of Rosicrucian membership.

The average age of the Rosicrucian member, taken from an analysis of the whole Jurisdiction, whether the members are in Australia, South Africa, Venezuela, or in the United States, etc., is *forty* years. Of course, there are several thousand members who are five, ten, or fifteen years younger, but they are in the minority. Is the Order responsible for this age level? Is there something we have failed to do to bring in younger people? There is a psychological explanation for this average age of forty years. The explanation is related to the very nature of the philosophical attitude of mind which is essential for Rosicrucian membership. This attitude of mind is one of judgment, of the appraisal of experience. It differs quite fundamentally from the scientific attitude of mind; the latter is analytical in an empirical sense, that is, the scrutiny of particulars and application of inductive reasoning. That is why you will find so many young people quite interested and successful in science. It is one thing to carefully examine an object, as in scientific analysis; it is still another to *evaluate* human experience and human relations, and as a result, to arrive at an ideal course of activity.

Philosophy seeks to take knowledge of life as it is acquired from experience, and as it touches the individual, and to construct it into an organic, connected whole. It seeks to discover the wisdom of human experience, which means the best way of applying what knowledge one may have gained from study and experience.

The philosophical attitude of mind requires a considerable contact with the vicissitudes of life. It needs a fairly comprehensi-

ble experience. When one begins to philosophize, to contemplate, he is drawing upon his experience; he is, to use a popular term, "screening" it. It means that he has reached a point in life when he has come to realize that his behavior and his thinking is, to a great extent, repetitious. There is, then, the subsequent *discovery* that much that is being done, or that he holds as a notion or belief, is without particular value! There is the personal conviction that considerable pruning must be done with one's thinking and living. The evaluation begins with a determination as to what is *good* and what is *bad*, what should be retained as habitual thoughts and actions and what should be discarded. This philosophical attitude, at first, is a kind of self-inventory, a taking stock of ourselves.

One of the prominent factors to be considered, therefore, is a determination of the real values of life. We must know or discover the good in existence. Once we have learned this, then it is used as a rule for the appraising of our experiences. The next great factor is to *organize* the number of beliefs and the kinds of activities which we consider as good. The experiences, the realities, of our life must then be tied together in such a way that one leads to another and results in a forward expansion of the whole good of our personality and existence. Unrelated thoughts or experiences, even though they be beneficial, could not suffice.

It is at this point that the Rosicrucian Order is of service to the individual. When one reaches this philosophical and mystical attitude of mind he begins his search. He wants to find some reliable authority by which to determine the value of his experiences. The Order has such tried and tested precepts for measuring life's experiences. When reading the Rosicrucian literature, the wording finds response in the consciousness of these matured persons. Of course, there are many who have not reached this maturity and yet they read the explanatory literature. They are prompted by curiosity and, as a result, no corresponding response is found within them.

The average man or woman of twenty-one years of age has not attained this philosophical attitude of mind. As yet, their experiences in life are comparatively few. Their disappointments and failures have not

been many. There has been as yet no serious challenge to their self-assurance, to their intelligence, and to their personal confidence. They are in a stage of the acquisition of experience; they are particularly observing and alert to life, but they are not quite ready to evaluate those experiences. There is also a kind of general goodness which seems to exist in the *newness* of all experience to youth. Youth can afford to expend itself, to take chances, to make mistakes—because of the resiliency of its spirit. Youth has a vast expectancy. To youth, it appears that life will make itself good. He has only to live it and experience it.

It takes the years to prove that life is indifferent, and that one must select his experiences and organize the results of them if one is to be happy. As a consequence, mysticism, metaphysics, and philosophical literature are not generally appreciated by the youth. Much that philosophy or mysticism would demand of him, he is not prepared to give. As yet, he knows too little of himself and of the vicissitudes of life. The philosophy of life is the business of living—and it is a serious business venture. Youth is the time for illusions, for fantasies, for dreams. The bluntness of reality comes soon enough.

It might be asked, could not the youth be spared many of his errors and the painful consequences if he were to share in some way in the wisdom of his elders? The mind properly cultivated early in youth admittedly matures more readily and reaches the philosophical attitude more quickly. Such is the purpose of the Child Culture Institute and of the Junior Order of Torch Bearers. A substantial number of these young people have become members of the Rosicrucian Order at an early age. They reflect the earlier training in their well-ordered thinking and living. Youths on the outside without such previous training are generally *not ready* for the Rosicrucian teachings; those that are ready do become members. As a matter of fact, our statistics show an increasing number of members affiliating with the Order at this time who are *under* thirty years of age.

As to whether it would be advisable to prepare special appeals in literary form for the ages of twenty to twenty-five years is a moot question. If one were to become

interested in such specially designed literature, and if he had not attained a philosophical attitude of mind, just how would you transmute that interest to the level of the Rosicrucian teachings? Conversely, if one has attained that attitude of mind, then our general literature should be acceptable. We do know, and such is being done, that a transition of our general appeal to meet the ever-changing mass-consciousness is necessary. The impact of current society, the advance of science, the changing standards of living and the new idealism require new techniques of approach to the *matured mind*. The AMORC staff is open to, and welcomes, the suggestions of our experienced members in matters of this kind—those who are active in youth activities or who are educators. What are your opinions?

The fact that there are many youths in religious groups, sects, church societies and the like, is not a parallel to Rosicrucian membership. In the majority of cases, such groups make two distinctly different appeals from what we do. One is highly emotional, including fear, hope and faith. The other is recreational and social. Even these do not always serve religion as they should. This is evident from the fact that the youth of many sects who are very active in youth functions never affiliate with the parent church on reaching their mental maturity. In its teachings, AMORC makes a minimum of emotional appeal and does not stress the social side, though we do, of course, include it.—X

The Classification of Consciousness

In one of our Chapters recently during a question-and-answer period, several questions were asked relating to the subject of consciousness. In reporting upon this particular Chapter Forum, one member inquired if she were correct in assuming there is in reality only one Consciousness. This she more fully explained by saying that the various so-called forms of consciousness that are described in psychology texts and in philosophy are merely terms applied to various manifestations of consciousness. The question is then, "Are there many forms of consciousness, or is there only one conscious state?"

It is well to remember that whatever is classified is brought into such formal arrange-

ment by the act of man. All classifications are man-made. Nature, the Cosmic, the universe, or anything which is not man-made, functions as a whole; it does not lend itself to forms or division. All changes in nature are forms of transition. Night blends into day, spring into summer, fall into winter; the sea and the land are divided by a constantly changing line. No hard and fast line can be drawn to separate the operations of nature. In the living world, men have classified and named various forms of animal life, but actually it is impossible to define exactly what the concept of species is in its manifestation.

Man in his desire to understand and control the world about him attempts to put things in order. This order is usually for a convenience, to serve him economically or socially; consequently, while classification and the establishment of system and order is a worthy project, it is possible for man to become a slave to system rather than to serve the thing itself.

Human consciousness has not been forgotten in man's attempt to classify; in many of the older psychological texts, one will find that consciousness has been classified into many forms. Much of present-day psychological terminology has developed from these classification attempts. Such words as subconscious, unconscious, semiconscious, subjective, objective, and many similar terms have as many meanings as there have been authors who have tried to classify the expression of consciousness as limited by these various terms.

Human consciousness is not a perfect thing. It is in part transitory since it is based upon the functioning of the physical brain and this phase of consciousness is therefore of no more ultimate value than is any other material thing. If we attempt to classify human consciousness, we must take into consideration that the consciousness within the human being is our only means of awareness of mental function and that the mind is not limited exclusively to the physical organ known as the brain but to the Vital Life Force or to the soul which is the real part of man, that is, his inner self.

In a recent article appearing in one of our publications, the Imperator classified the mind as objective, subjective, and subconscious, the subconscious mind being the most

profound phase of mind which is the part below the level of consciousness that maintains the connecting link between human beings, as entities, and God. Consciousness, as we are aware of it, exists only in the objective mind. We have no knowledge of consciousness except to the extent that we have an awareness of being. When we consider consciousness as a whole, it is the objective part of which we are aware, and the part that is subjective and within the subconscious is below the level of awareness. We must also consider a whole manifestation of which we may not be aware in personal experience, but which we accept as a premise to use in building much of the fundamental doctrine of our Rosicrucian philosophy.

There is in the final reality only one consciousness. That consciousness is the consciousness of the Absolute, or the Divine. It is the essence which causes all manifestation to function; it is the first cause and the final reality combined into one. This consciousness which we can define in many terms, the consciousness of God or the Divine Consciousness, is that of which the individual human consciousness is only one small segment. If we accept this concept as truth, then the consciousness of God is our consciousness—when we can become aware of it. We can become aware of it provided we are in a position to so relate our own consciousness to that level which is above and beyond our own physical limitations. Man's growth from the standpoint of evolution has ever been from a lower form toward a more complex and elaborate one.

The first form of life was a single cell. Man today is composed of a complicated mass of cells. The first form of consciousness in the single cell was merely the force of life. Now this force has a highly organized set of functions within the nervous system of the higher animals. But man is still limited to some degree to the environment in which he functions. All knowledge and experience reach human consciousness in terms of time, although the same knowledge and experience exist in terms of the Eternal. We only gain in knowledge and experience insofar as we keep at a certain level of expression which is in terms of time and a physical universe. We grow—that is, our consciousness expands—insofar as we release from control of our consciousness the limi-

tations of time and the boundaries established by any physical barriers. Our scope of consciousness may now be limited, our knowledge is only partial, but everything in the history of man's evolution, everything in his true conscious experience, points toward eventual growth and the attainment of awareness of one consciousness, the consciousness of God.—A

Rose-Croix University

As the 1953 term of the Rose-Croix University approaches, it is not unusual to receive letters from many members in all parts of our jurisdiction asking for further information regarding the University in addition to that which is given in *The Story of Learning* and other literature which is published concerning this institution. We have recently completed the tentative plans for the 1953 term of the University in a conference held by the Dean to incorporate the suggestions of the Supreme Officers. The main courses to be offered for this year's term have been discussed and plans made for various ideas to take effect during this year's University term.

The University this year will begin on June 22 and continue through July 11. The session therefore begins later in the month than it has in recent years which will give an opportunity to those who might not be able to leave their homes at an earlier date in June, or before school is out, to attend this year's University term. The complete idea of the Rose-Croix University, its scope and function, is outlined in the booklet entitled *The Story of Learning*. The Rose-Croix University in this jurisdiction was instituted by the late Dr. H. Spencer Lewis. It was established for the purpose of perpetuating the cultural activities of the Rosicrucian Order for the benefit of the individuals who wished to participate in its activities.

The courses offered fall into three categories, the three colleges of the University. One is devoted to the Fine and Mystic Arts, one to the Sciences, and one to the Humanities. Each of these colleges offers courses on specialized subjects, at all times trying to stress and to correlate the principles of the subject matter with the concept of Rosicrucianism.

The question most frequently asked by the individual member of the Order is, "Who

may attend the Rose-Croix University?" There is no restriction to become a student except that individuals in attendance must be active members of the Rosicrucian Order. It is a school for Rosicrucians, and only those who are active members are privileged to attend or participate in any of the activities of the Rose-Croix University.

"Is special training necessary in order to attend?" This is usually the next question. We do have a series of lectures, six matriculation lectures for each college, which the prospective student studies and upon which he passes a simple examination. These lectures are not difficult. They are as easy to understand as the monographs which you study each week, but they serve to review or establish a foundation upon which the student can continue study in the residence classes conducted during the University term.

Some students, that is, members of AMORC, have said that they would like to attend the Rose-Croix University but feel that they would be unable to understand what was being taught. This, of course, is merely a misunderstanding of the scope and activities of the University. Its purpose is to present the subjects in which its students will be interested in a way that they can be understood. The material covered in the instruction of the Rose-Croix University is no more difficult than that which is contained in the Rosicrucian teachings.

The faculty are specially prepared through experience and training in the subjects which they teach. They are also prepared to deal with the individual problems of the individual student who wishes to gain additional knowledge and training in the field that meets his particular interest. Bear in mind also that the entire Rose-Croix University student body is composed of members just like yourself, individuals who wish to gain certain new knowledge or new information or to review subjects they have studied before. In recent years particularly, many members have come to the Rose-Croix University to study the Rosicrucian explanation of certain phenomena in the physical world, and to learn how the Rosicrucian teachings can be related to the studies of the arts and humanities.

Some of the subjects to be offered this year will include in the field of fine and mystic arts, a course devoted to music and

another to art. Students may take either one or the other in the College of Fine and Mystic Arts and have specialized instruction in either music or art. In the sciences, the student can study Light and Color in the field of the physical sciences, and the sciences of life in the field of the biological sciences or the ancient lore of alchemy. In the College of Humanities, philosophy will include a survey of thought that has led up to the modern concepts of civilization and to the formulation of the philosophical content of our present-day thinking and background of Rosicrucian philosophy. There is also a course in psychology that helps the individual to better understand himself and his environment. Mind and Mysticism includes the teachings of philosophic and religious leaders through man's history and how their ideals may be applied to our lives today.

In addition to these principal or major subjects, there are minor or elective courses. Within these fields there is a wide choice in music, art, science, Rosicrucian healing, literature, drama, and many other subjects that will interest the student who may devote an hour or more a day to these various studies. One purpose of the Rose-Croix University is to make available instruction in such fields as will be of particular interest to the Rosicrucians, and also to provide the contacts that are made possible in an institution having only within its student body those individuals who are members of the Rosicrucian Order and therefore have similar or like interests.

In addition to the instruction, there are many opportunities for social contacts and organized activities on the part of the student body and the alumni association made up of those who have attended previous terms at the Rose-Croix University. Following the three-weeks' period of the Rose-Croix University during which classes are held every day including Saturdays, the student has the opportunity to remain at Rosicrucian Park for one more week and participate in the annual international Grand Lodge Convention. Make your plans now to be one of the students registering at the Rose-Croix University for its 1953 term.

This year, as a special feature, there will be daily lectures given by members of the faculty and of the staff of the Supreme and Grand Lodges. These officers will speak

upon various subjects related to principles having to do with the Order's teachings or its philosophy. Such lectures will be in addition to the subjects for which you may register as your major course. During this 1953 term, there will be a special series of lectures on the subject of prophecy. We will not attempt to prophesy the future in detail but we will attempt to teach each individual who is a student at the University the principles of prophecy, how prophecy has developed, why man has sought to learn of the future, how he has been able to reconcile the findings that are based upon fact and those which are based upon theory or upon imagination. This special series of lectures will be in addition to all the regular features which are listed in *The Story of Learning*.

For further information concerning the Rose-Croix University and the activities of this year, write for your copy of *The Story of Learning*; and ask also for a copy of the prospectus which outlines the courses specifically to be offered in 1953. You will enjoy reading this material and receiving full instructions as to how you can prepare yourself in order to be one of the registered students at the Rose-Croix University this year.—A

Cycles of Success

A frater now addresses our Forum: "One of the subjects in the Rosicrucian work which has interested me most is that of periods and cycles. The articles on favorable and unfavorable periods have explained to me why some things in my life have prospered and borne fruit, and why some others have not been fruitful.

"The subject of periodicity or cycles is interesting in many ways. The University of Pennsylvania has kept records on orchard performance over a period of thirty-five years. Until the last few years, the *seven-year* periodicity has been very strong. The good years were seven years apart; the years of moderate crops seven years apart; and every seven years was the calamity year with a complete or nearly complete crop failure.

"I have a special question to ask in connection with cyclical periods. Is human enterprise governed more by factors and influences connected with the enterprise in itself

or is it influenced more by the cycles of the men in charge of it?"

In a very splendid work, the first in recent times, by Dr. H. Spencer Lewis, entitled *Self Mastery and Fate with the Cycles of Life*, the author points out the rhythmic periodicity of human life. He says in part: "According to this primary cycle, human life is divided into a progression of periods, each period lasting approximately seven complete sun years or seven years of approximately 365 days each." Dr. Lewis further shows that each individual's life cycle, though consisting of the seven-year periods, may be subdivided into daily periods as well. Some of these daily periods are advantageous and others are not. The periods have a relationship to the time of one's birth. Consequently, a certain period may be beneficial to one individual but not to another. The underlying principle of Dr. Lewis' work is based upon the fundamental cycles that govern natural phenomena, as the celestial movements and development in cellular or living matter. Thousands of persons have found his text, with the extensive charts it provides, to be most effective in the governing of their lives. Many years after Dr. Lewis published his work, the noted statistician and columnist, Roger W. Babson, confirmed Dr. Lewis' writings in principle by publishing a brochure of his own on the influence of cycles on human affairs.

There could be no such condition as natural law if there were not cycles. Natural law is the universal *recurrence* of certain phenomena. A progressive change of phenomena, as a transition of one thing into another each time with entirely different effects, as energy, force or form, would result in chaos. Not only would there be no identical manifestations but no order, no persistent underlying cause, which could be discerned or, if it was, it could not be utilized, for the next moment it would be forever gone. The cycle, then, constitutes the limit of a phenomenon, the circle of its manifestation. The beginning of a cycle is where the phenomenon exhibits its characteristics. Then there is the development, progression or enlargement of it, and the end is its retrogression or return to the beginning again. A cycle then is an oscillation between the two poles or extremes of a phenomenon.

If the human organism, with its intellectual and psychical powers, is affected by cycles and that which man may work with is likewise affected, how can the two be coordinated? In substance the frater's question is, "Can man sometimes be actually working against himself?" A man may in conducting research in a certain field be governed by the periodicity of that enterprise and yet he may not be working in accordance with the cycles of his own highest efficiency. Consequently, he may not have the success which he should. Economists are now of the opinion that there are cycles of prosperity, of depressions, and periods between of neither extreme. These are repeated with such regularity as to be indicative of cyclical law. Of course, some periods of depression are worse than others. Just why these economic cycles occur is not yet entirely known. It is highly probable that they are governed by one of two factors, the human cycle or perhaps such physical ones as sunspots.

For a considerable time, the phenomenon of sunspots was an interesting astronomical inquiry. With the advent of radio and the transmission of ultra-high-frequency waves, it was found that large sunspots caused electrical interference in the transmission of transoceanic radio communications. That the sunspots apparently transmitted radiations which, in turn, seemed to neutralize the radio waves, became the general theory. The phases of the moon have also been shown to affect plant life in experiments conducted by several botanists and horticulturists of well-known universities. There is great probability, so think some leading psychologists and biologists, that the human organism may also be affected by solar radiations caused by sunspots.

From the Rosicrucian point of view, the sensitive sympathetic nervous system and the psychic centers may be stimulated or depressed by impulses discharged into the atmosphere by sunspots. They may in a very subtle way affect the human emotions and, in turn, leave impressions upon the faculty of reason. This could cause aggressiveness, excessive sensitivity, subliminal anxieties, and other mental characteristics that would react in human lives and affairs. Extreme materialism, aggressiveness and the lowering of moral inclinations to any great

extent, as we have found prevalent in most areas of the world today, could be the consequence of the impact of solar disturbances on the human nervous system and mentality. Obviously, these, in turn, would affect man's economic welfare by influencing his judgment and his intellectual vision.

We are ignorant of many of the cycles and underlying laws and forces of nature. What we now know of natural law is probably infinitesimal in contrast to what is to be known. We must learn as much as we can about ourselves as soon as possible. Many of our personal cycles may be made to correspond to those of nature which are already known. Such assures greater probability of human success in most enterprises. For example, one psychologist, in conducting experiments, found that students were able to concentrate and to memorize more effectively during one phase of the moon than in another. The Rosicrucian Order has conducted similar experiments with interesting results. In both instances the experiments were too few to be conclusive in any sense. However, that there are periods when our mental faculties are more alert, more suited for beginning certain enterprises, Dr. Lewis' book has proved in many cases. There are, then, fortunate and unfortunate times each day for beginning certain business and domestic affairs or in endeavoring to influence the minds of others.

Notwithstanding our continued prating that we are free agents, actually we are not. Our freedom is subject to inclination. The inclination is the effect of causes lying deep within the cycles of our life forces and the conditions of our environment. Our will thus is often not the consequence of our judgment, as we think, but a latent impulse or desire aroused by causes of which we are often not conscious. *Harmony* or concordance is still the key to the mastery of life. Learn how to co-ordinate your microcosm, the small universe of your being, with the larger one of the Cosmic for fuller living.—X

Do Not Test God

A subject to which comments in this Forum frequently return is that of concentration, one of the basic techniques of individual development. Such questions, too, are ever present in our Correspondence department.

It would seem in the years that thousands of members have passed through our Neophyte degrees that there would be no new questions to ask on this subject, and the correspondents who direct all the communications with our members would have an immediate answer for any possible question that a new member might ask. However, the approaches to this subject of concentration are sometimes almost as new as the ideas of the individuals. The reason for this is that the concept of concentration as given in the first few lectures of the Rosicrucian teachings, and particularly in the latter part of the first Neophyte degree, opens a scope of possible advancement, or extends the vision of the individual in a way that he had probably never considered before.

Regardless of the background of study that anyone may have had prior to becoming a member of the Order, I doubt that he would find anything more challenging than the Rosicrucian technique of concentration. This is all important because without the ability to concentrate the student cannot reorient his thinking and establish a foundation for the absorbing of the mystical philosophy that becomes the basis of the Rosicrucian teachings.

Even of more importance to the individual is that by proper concentration he is able to immediately utilize some of the principles that are taught him. Every individual who seriously approaches the development of the concentration technique realizes that it is like having a new sense faculty added. He has something new to work with: a new avenue with which to approach his problems, the circumstances of his environment, his various situations in life. It is the most important tool that is given the student who enters into these studies with which he can, in a true sense of the word, attempt to map out a new life and a new philosophy. Regardless of how important other things may be, this concept is of first importance to the member.

I will not attempt here to relate the basic concept in regard to the use of concentration, since that has been done many times. Concentration as a technique is well explained in our monographs. But what is important from time to time is our attitude toward this technique. We need a degree of confidence until we have gained enough ex-

perience to replace that confidence. True it is also that a Rosicrucian does not accept faith as a final reality; he must develop knowledge instead. But we have to approach a technique with an assurance on our part that since it has been used by others, it can also work for us if we have the assurance and the determination to stay with the problem and work it out.

One thing that we must never do is to set ourselves up as a medium of testing the functioning of any psychological or mystical law. There are individuals who have certain aims or ends which they feel are most important for them to achieve. They are attempting to accomplish a change in their life, a change in their environment, in order to gain something that seems to be lacking; thus, the new student may start concentrating with enthusiasm on the fulfillment of that desire whatever it may be. This is a natural thing and concentration should, by all means, be used for this purpose, but we must be able to do so with the full recognition that regardless of our technique of concentration, or of our purpose, we are after all finite in our judgment. It is the infinite laws that in the end must govern the functioning of our whole life and being.

Therefore, always enter into a process of concentration with the realization and confidence that the right thing will come from your process. The result may not be exactly what we hoped for, but it will come out as it should if we concentrate conscientiously and leave the final decision in the hands of the Cosmic. Never say that you will concentrate for a thing over a certain period of time and then if a definite result doesn't come you'll do something else. Never test God. Always leave the way open for the manifestation of laws which you may see only in part because of your finite vision and limited range of contact.—A

Popular Psychology Books

Recently, a member asked for our opinion in regard to a number of popular psychology books which have been prevalent on the market in the past few years. Most of these books have a very good foundation insofar as presenting many psychological facts in a popular form easily understandable by any reader who might be interested in self-im-

provement or in the study of human behavior. During the past few years there has been a particular interest in this field. A number of these books have become best-sellers. Some have sold even better than fiction—some have week after week led the best-seller list and have amazed both the publisher and the author with the interest shown in these publications.

Most of these books are for the purpose of informing the average individual of certain facts about himself. Actually, the individual who has never studied formal or academic psychology has very little knowledge of his own physiological and psychological self. It is really amazing how uninformed the average man on the street is concerning himself. Many simple facts that are presented in these popular books seem amazing to the individual who has never seriously studied anything that has to do with certain basic principles of psychology.

In the popular sense of the word, psychology is usually conveyed to be something of the science of the mind. In the academic sense, psychology goes beyond this, not only to study the mental processes of the individual, but also to make a study of how he functions and how he behaves. Psychology is therefore, in the broadest sense of the definition, a study of the function of the mind and of the manifestation of human thinking and emotion through behavior. Some of these books, in a popular sense, appeal particularly to the individuals who do very little thinking for themselves. This is not, in a sense, a reflection against such books or an attempt to depreciate their value, but actually many of the so-called semipopular books are merely presenting concepts to an individual that he has not taken the time to think out for himself.

A few years ago, one of the most popular of these books was a very excellent one called *Peace of Mind*. This book sold in the best-seller list month after month, and a large edition was printed a number of times. It presented some basic principles on how an individual may use his own mental faculties to increase his enjoyment of life, to make it possible for him to live a more even and better organized existence. The principles involved were simple; they were presented in a form that the average individual had just not thought of. The book also had

a certain amount of respect for a divinity that instilled in the individual the knowledge that there was something outside himself where he could anchor and find support and help in time of need.

As helpful as these books may be, we want to point out here that they are not a substitute for, nor even a supplement to, Rosicrucianism. To the best of my knowledge, none of the authors of recent best sellers in this field has been a member of this organization. Although there are certain principles discussed in these works that have caused members to ask whether or not they are basically Rosicrucian in concept, they are, when actually analyzed, found not to contain very much that is in the Rosicrucian teachings aside from the surface material or the basic philosophy of right living.

Most of these presentations fall short in one important respect. They are basically built upon a modern psychology that takes into consideration the theory that the individual is a mechanical being. Although, as I have already pointed out, a number of these books acknowledge a God, a divine power, they are mainly concerned with the individual as a functioning human entity, as a physiological being rather than as a soul. To the best of my knowledge, there has never been written in a popular form a book that approaches the human being from the mystical standpoint. I mean by mystical standpoint, the position that emphasizes the importance of the inner self, that acknowledges the existence of a soul, of a possible link with a higher being or with a force higher than is existent within the individual in addition to his purely objective psychological function.

As we have frequently said before, the most important aspect of Rosicrucianism has to do with its mystical concepts, the idea that man can relate himself to his creator, that man is in part imbued with a divine energy, with a divine personality which he can use as a medium to relate himself to a God—that is the ultimate purpose of life. Any psychological study that fails to take into consideration this ultimate aim falls short of supplying the individual with most of his psychological needs. Rosicrucianism, based upon a mystical philosophy, teaches man to develop his inner potentialities toward the bringing about of a satisfactory relationship

between himself and a divine power, a power that is transcending him in its existence, but yet is within the realm of contact insofar as his psychic or inner self is concerned.—A

Contemplation: A Key to Mastership

There are many keys to mastership or, as it has been stated in another way, there are many paths to achievement. No single one is the final or the magic key which will unlock all doors for everyone. Each of us must gain abilities and certain efficiency in those techniques which together will contribute to our growth, development, and evolution. That contemplation has been considered a part of a good life was known in the greatest period of Greek philosophy. Our Western civilization having been influenced by these basic concepts of Greek philosophy has preserved much of the idealism that has gone to make up the way of life which has become an ideal in the Western world.

Aristotle in agreement with Plato said that there are three basic forms of life which develop according to the good for which different types of men strive. These three forms are: the life of pleasure, the life of action, and, finally, the life of contemplation. The life of pleasure is merely the seeking of satisfaction of our physical sensations. It is therefore a life on a level little higher than that found in the animal world. On a truly human level, the next form is a life of action in which man puts into manifestation those traits by which he is human. It is a life of moral virtue, an exemplification of the good which is inherent or potential within man. The highest form of life—the life preferred by the philosopher and the mystic—is that of contemplation. It is a life devoted primarily to being an observer of all being, a life in which the highest pleasure is found in the activity of pure intellect. It is a life of growth beyond the physical limitations of a material world, by putting into effect the ability of the human being to use his consciousness in the advanced form with which man is equipped so that he may extend or project himself beyond the routine and confinement of the material world. Pleasure then is not looked upon as a wrong, but its highest good is found in the activity of the mental and psychic self rather than in the satisfaction of

the physical self. Aristotle also stressed as important the fact that the life of contemplation is something which we do not enjoy to the fullest as human beings alone; rather, we participate in the fullest possibilities of this life insofar as there is in us something of the Divine.

Contemplation as a key to mastership is one of the channels by which man re-relates himself to God, brings himself to an awareness of the Divine character of his soul and to a degree of knowledge concerning his own destiny. To evolve toward mastership, to direct ourselves to the ultimate achievement of Cosmic Consciousness, requires our learning the use and the development of our individual potentialities. It is because of this concept that Rosicrucianism attempts to relate theory and practice. We begin early in the Rosicrucian teachings, through the use of simple exercises, to develop the technique so necessary for this ultimate growth. We must not lose sight of the importance of that bridge between technique and theory which must be expanded in all phases of human activity. We may read until we have mastered the theory of music or swimming, for example, but the technique only comes through its application. It is in the routine practice of scales in music and proper movements in swimming that the technique of the knowledge which we have learned can be made useful and the actual practice put into effect.

Three important techniques which contribute to psychic growth as presented by the Rosicrucian teachings are: concentration, meditation, and contemplation. At this time, we are primarily considering the subject of contemplation, but it is necessary to remember that all these steps are important. It might be that some individuals confuse these techniques or think of them as being the same thing or merely different manifestations of the same thing. Actually they serve purposes that can quite specifically classify them. Concentration is an active process; it is a function of volition. In our concentration, we, by the use of will, attempt to direct all conscious force or power upon the thing under consideration so that different mental forces may be brought to bear upon the situation. The technique and procedure is thoroughly explained in our monographs and will not be repeated here.

In contrast to concentration being an active process, meditation is passive. We cannot at all times be exerting our will toward growth or change; there must be periods of absorption—when we attempt to absorb into consciousness that which we have gained through concentration or as the result of concentration. This is the state of meditation.

Contemplation as differentiated from concentration and meditation is the continual creative process by which we attempt to link the results of our own concentration and meditation with the concepts and experiences of ourselves and others—where we, as stated by the ancient philosophers, become the observers of all life, all being, and attempt to comprehend the ultimate purpose of the Divine as we may be able to understand it. Contemplation is the means of tying together what we have gained in knowledge and experience whether the source of our knowledge and experience was gained by objective learning or through intuitive impressions.

An encyclopedia contains many facts, but even if an individual had an encyclopedic knowledge, without the contemplative life allowing the individual to relate the various informative elements, the knowledge itself could have little value. If we are to live to the fullest of our potentialities, we must be able to dwell at times upon the contemplation of our entire being and our entire knowledge and experience. In that sense, contemplation is truly the end and the aim of life. The purpose of contemplation, from the Rosicrucian standpoint, is to attain the direct and intuitive awareness of God. This, then, makes us realize that contemplation is an important step toward our mystic union with God.

It follows from this idea that society is good to the extent that it renders contemplation possible for those who compose it. A society so controlling the thoughts and actions of its members that they cannot draw their own conclusions (cannot direct their consciousness toward their own aims and ideals) lowers the dignity of individuality and therefore suppresses a manifestation of the Divine. Some members of society can and must be mystics if human society as a whole is to reach its ultimate end or purpose. Mysticism concerns the continual expression of consciousness, the gradual but persistent

awareness of the Infinite. For this process to take place within man, man must be able to draw upon a source of value that is eternal and should not limit, or bind, himself to a world of temporal things.

We must be able to consume the goods of Eternity if we are to realize eternal values, or if we are to give out to our fellow humans the goods of time. The whole concept of mysticism is based upon the idea that we increase in our awareness of the Divine in direct proportion to our ability to be Godlike. God is the ultimate truth whose reflection is mirrored in time. This means, to us as finite beings, that God changes in terms of our experience and continues to change until we as finite beings are able to raise our consciousness to that level which enables us to comprehend Infinite Being.—A

Does the Self Survive Death?

This is perhaps one of the most difficult of subjects on which to express an opinion. The only certainty is that, no matter what position is taken, one is sure to arouse controversy. Since the content of the topic is so intimately related to religious doctrine, any opposing answer, no matter how innocuously presented, may offend the religious beliefs of someone.

Perhaps the greatest factor in the development of the religious spirit has been the desire for *immortality*. The instinct of self-preservation is very basic. It is part of the very activity of the life force itself. The self is identified with life force. In other words, to the average individual the consciousness of self and of life are synonymous. Even when one is unconscious, it is presumed that self lies just behind the curtain of awareness waiting to express itself again. The early human minds, where we have any account of their thoughts, recognized a duality in human nature. There was the physical awareness, the body itself, on the one hand; and, on the other, the intangible self which was experienced during dreams. This intangible self was likewise, to the primitive mind, associated with the force of life which, in turn, was related most frequently to air. Breath is air. The dead body does not breathe; and so, when the breath departs, the self also must be carried away on the wings of the breeze. That is why

the soul was associated with *pneuma* by the Greeks, since this corresponds to breath and air. The equivalent in other languages has the same meaning in the doctrines of several early religions.

Primitive man, through experience, learned of the transition of the physical body. Its impermanence and decay were all too evident. Air could not be destroyed. All around man there was air, invisible and apparently immune to any of the forces that affect matter. The self, the inner man, so closely related to breath, air and life, was also as invisible as the air and must then be immune to the causes of death. In other words, the conclusion was that the self must survive death. This, in turn, helped to mitigate the instinctive terror of death. Particularly did it satisfy the latent desire to continue to live. Death became but a transition, a change from one form of expression of the self to another. Man continued to live as man, it was thought, but in another world. Many of the ancient religions considered that the surviving self continued to have a body. The self was not wholly abstract; it had a form, looked as it did on earth, and even conducted its affairs in a manner not wholly unfamiliar. It is for this reason that the Egyptians, Etruscans, Cretans, and those of other early cultures buried with the dead their favorite possessions. It was expected that in the next life the deceased would use his jewelry, implements, weapons, and even furniture.

In drawing this parallel between the existence of the self in physical form in this world and its existence in the eternal life, the ancients likewise drew a similarity of all experiences. From such a line of reasoning, it seemed logical to deduce that each individual in the afterlife would recognize himself; that is, his identity would not be lost. Further he would retain a full memory of all his life's experiences. He would have free intercourse to speak and be with all relatives and friends who were also in the other world. Obviously, this inclination for a most complete afterlife was made to include a facile exchange of ideas or communications between those who remained behind—both loved ones and enemies.

Psychologically, man was trying to create an ideal world for himself. He was peopling it with those he loved and establishing in it

those things and conditions that gratified the earthly human appetites and desires. The world hereafter was a transference of the conditions and enjoyments of this life but without any of the aggravations, restrictions, or limitations. The afterworld thus became a place where man could do what he wanted to do in accordance with what he thought was best to do. This kind of conception of the next life made death but a momentary break in the continuation of existence, though the existence that was to follow transcended this one in the happiness which it would provide.

It is interesting to note that man readily associated pain, evil, suffering, denial, and all limitations of personal power with the earth. The world and the body itself were confining; in fact, as the early Greeks thought, the body was a prison of the soul. When the soul or self, which was identified with it, departed, it was thought to be stripped of all such encumbrances. It never seemed to occur to most of these early thinkers that almost all of the pleasures they anticipated in the next life were physical and psychological, related to the body which they were casting off. To leave the body behind was not only to leave suffering but, as well, the desires for pleasure, the joys and sentiments, the experiences of friends and relatives, and all sensual gratification whatsoever. Even when the self was considered as an ethereal body, like the air itself, these believers expected it to possess faculties and attributes common to the body and the mental self. There would be ambition, love as human beings know it, and interest in many of the ideals which the mortal mind had conceived.

This kind of thinking is interrelated with the *instinct of survival*. Life to most men is not a force, an energy, an abstract Cosmic phenomenon. Rather, it is principally a *state of living*. This state consists of a matrix of experiences, such as men are familiar with in this existence. Survival after death would mean, then, not just a continuation of life or of a kind of awareness but, as well, most of the state of living with which we are familiar.

Most persons in the advanced civilizations and religions of our era tenaciously embrace these same ideas. They fervently cling to such beliefs. To explain immortality from

any other conceptional viewpoint seems to them to attack their eternal security. The Biblical adage, that the Kingdom of God is within, should most certainly apply to these believers. If their self finds satisfaction and they enjoy peace profound in such conceptions, by no means should they be disturbed, no matter how implausible their beliefs may be to others. Conversely, their beliefs should be no reason for suppressing the conceptions of those who think differently.

As one understands more of the processes of mind and acquires a more profound philosophical and mystical insight into reality, his conception of survival after death changes. He can no longer believe or find satisfaction in the thought that self has experiences in the next life as one knows them here. Further, he cannot accept the idea that self, in the sense of personality, will be as we know it in this mortal existence. The real mystic knows that self is immured within a framework of certain components. The self as we know it, the commonly expressed personality, is but a phase of the various manifestations of consciousness. Self, as ordinarily comprehended, is a combination of the perception of will—that is, the realizing of our agency of choice—and the perceptions we have of externality. It is, in other words, a joint awareness of the phenomenal world and that faculty by which we are able to distinguish our organic inclinations and preferences as apart from all else. Consequently, self manifests as the separation of reality into *I am* and *I am not*. Since self arises out of consciousness or that sensitivity which the life force has to its organism and environment, a transition of the sensitivity, a change in the nature of consciousness, will affect the content of self. The consciousness is like a vast stream and the realization of the ego, or the awareness that the consciousness has of itself, varies as it progresses deeper into this stream.

We have said that the self that we are most familiar with arises from our distinguishing between will as the power of choice and our perception of the external world. When we move farther into the channels of the stream of consciousness, we entirely lose our awareness of the external world. We also no longer exhibit the faculty of memory by which to recall images of the outside world. Does this mean, then, that, since

there is no externality remaining to contrast with will, self must fail to exist? No, the duality still exists, but it is of another character. The self of will subdivides into new elements as does, for example, the living cell in the process of reproduction. Will or desire are stripped from consciousness because there is nothing to desire. Sensual experience is gone. As a consequence, each former manifestation of self stands in the same relationship to the next higher aspect of it as does the external world to what we call the ego. Thus the self becomes more and more exalted until there is absolutely no similarity to the normal self.

In mysticism the individual strives to express self in these higher or deeper realms of consciousness, instead of in the objective and subjective spheres only. *Cosmic consciousness* is an awareness of the universal consciousness. What attains such realization is self, too, but not that aspect of self of which we are normally conscious. All the determinate qualities of the world, form, dimension, desire, are stripped from self in that state of consciousness. Mystics and students of mysticism, who have experienced Cosmic consciousness, usually refer to it as an ecstasy, a sublime pleasure. The word *pleasure*, however, is a misnomer. It cannot be pleasure, that is, sensual or emotional. It is difficult to explain. We can best say that it is like a state of imperturbability; that is, it has no positive nature but one that is free of all sensations and thus creates a kind of experience in itself. Or again, to use an analogy, it is like saying that nothing is the absence of something. One can only describe nothing in *terms* of something, that which it might have been but is not.

If Cosmic consciousness can produce such an exalted self, are we to presume that a self that would survive transition or death would be of any lesser nature? Certainly the self that could persist after death would be of the highest aspect of consciousness. The whole premise "that there can be life after death" rests on the foundation that there are universal forces in nature which go through change but are immutable in essence. We believe that life force—and we have much assurance for our belief—is an attribute of a Cosmic universal force. When united with that other force which produces what we call *matter*, we have that

miracle or phenomenon of animate and *conscious* beings. With the development of the organism, the consciousness becomes more complex, resulting in the self-awareness of human beings. There is and must be, though we shall not take the space here to give our reasons, a universal consciousness that is associated with the whole spectrum or keyboard of Cosmic energy. With the transition of the human organism, the life force and its inherent consciousness is freed into the universal consciousness of which it is a part. Is it absorbed like a raindrop falling in the sea, or does its interval in the human organism cause it to retain an individuality of a kind, like a speck of oil floating upon a stream? Mystics take this latter view that there is a slight alteration in the consciousness, which characteristic is retained as the personality in the Cosmic after death.

The more profound thinkers, even though regarding this existence in the Cosmic as the self, cannot confer upon it the functions and kind of awareness that we know here or that most religionists like to believe. Why should we insist upon the same ideals of affection, the same standards of happiness for the Cosmic as we experience here? As Seneca, Roman philosopher, so aptly said: "What is death? A tragic mask. Turn it and examine it. See, it does not bite. The poor body must be separate from the spirit either now or later as it was separated from it before."

"Pass, then, through thy little space of time conformably to nature, and end thy journey in content, just as an olive falls off when it is ripe, blessing nature who produced it, and thanking the tree upon which it grew."—X

Violation of Oaths

An oath of obligation is a vocative or written pledge. It is an expression of the will of the individual wherein, on his honor and integrity, he agrees to do or not to do certain things. Such oaths should never be taken lightly, for to violate them constitutes a definite aspersion upon the character of the individual so doing. To take an oath in verbal or written form with mental reservations or equivocation is to falsify. Specifically, it is lying or cheating. To take an oath indifferently or with the intention of abrogating or violating it, whenever it is to your

advantage, is also falsification; it indicates that your motive is not commensurate with what you have expressed in the oath itself. It further implies that your word is not supported by strong character and resolve. The moral fiber of an individual, his moral worth and dependability to his friends and to society, generally, are indicated by one's support of his oath and solemn obligations.

The Rosicrucian Order, just as many fraternal Orders and societies, has oaths and obligations which its members are obliged to take. These oaths, if honestly given, are assurance that the *inner self* of the individual, his moral being or consciousness, is in accord with the spirit and purpose of the Order. The oaths ask that the individual declare himself on those issues which represent the teachings, policies, and the principles of the Order. The Order must trust and have the confidence of its members—who, in fact, constitute the *body* of the Order. It cannot extend cherished and sacred traditions to one who, in turn, does not pledge to do, or not to do, certain things in consideration of what he receives.

There is nothing ever exacted under a Rosicrucian membership oath or obligation to which any circumspect, morally proper member would not want to subscribe. The Order requires its members to keep confidential the teachings, rituals, passwords, signs, and certain symbols. If these things have a true worth to the sincere member, and he is desirous of protecting them, he gladly subscribes. The oaths also pledge one's allegiance to good citizenship and to a program of living a good, morally upright life, and to help the advancement and enlightenment of humanity. The individual who hesitates to sign such an obligation or equivocates, or dissents in any way from such clearly presented oaths, immediately places himself under suspicion; his hesitation implies that he may have some ulterior motive. After all, if one believes in what the oaths declare, why should there be any reservations about signing? The oaths contain no components which cannot be met by the individual. They do not bind one to do the impossible. They do not compel him to remain forever in the Order. They do request one to try to live an honorable life and to respect the noble purposes and truths of the Order.

The individual who states that he mentally subscribes to the oath, but that he has scruples against *signing* one, though it expresses the same ideas, is not very consistent. One should have the courage or the conviction of his thoughts. If he thinks rightly, he should say so, and act accordingly. Be proud of the stand you have taken. The one who refuses to sign an oath with which he professes to be in accord, displays a pusillanimous character. Actually, experience has shown that such persons really have certain mental reservations and their refusal to sign a membership obligation is often so that they may later violate it without leaving evidence of their insincerity.

The Rosicrucian principles, oaths, and obligations are not secret. The primary oath, for example, to which each Neophyte must subscribe, may be disclosed to others. The Rosicrucian Order is unique, perhaps, in not keeping its oaths secret, as do most fraternal orders. They contain no language that the public could misinterpret or at which anyone could be shocked. The oaths do not threaten bodily harm for violation, or intimidate the individual in any religious or theological sense, as do those of many other societies.

Each Rosicrucian is under oath and moral obligation not to share the official monographs, rituals, teachings, charts, diagrams, and instruction matter with a *nonmember*. There are no exceptions to this provision. The fact that a wife, mother, sister, husband, or brother for example, may share your home constitutes no justifiable reason to permit them to read or examine your confidential study matter. The individual who does so, in disregard of his obligations, is a dishonorable person. In a sense, he is a thief because he has misappropriated the confidence which the Order has placed in him. If close relatives and friends manifest an interest in the Rosicrucian Order, its philosophy and teachings, then, they can through the proper and *ethical channels* become members of AMORC. The Rosicrucian Order is distinct in providing a very economical system of membership whereby relatives may become companion members after meeting certain requirements.

What would you think of a Freemason, an Elk, or an Eastern Star who after taking solemn vows to keep confidential his rites

and ceremonies would deliberately divulge them to a nonmember, whether one of his family or not? You would agree that such a person is contemptible and should be subject to expulsion from that Order. Most certainly it is no less a violation to permit others to have access to the teachings, under any pretext!

Further, the intelligent and ethical nonmember—husband, wife, daughter, etc.—will not demand that the member permit him to read confidential membership material. Certainly the wife could not, for example, demand that her husband escort her into a closed session of the Masonic Order, or of any other Lodge. Why then should she expect that he must violate his Rosicrucian membership oath and divulge the contents of the teachings?

One may, and should, tell others with pride that he is a member of the Rosicrucian Order. He may give them the free, public literature provided by the Order, which explains about it. He should, likewise, say that the study material has been entrusted to him under obligation as a member. He is not at liberty to permit others to read or study it, unless they, too, are members. The understanding relative—wife, husband, son, or daughter, etc.—will realize that such a bond of close relationship does not mean that one should sacrifice his integrity as an individual and his self-respect, by violating his fraternal oaths. Where one cannot, for lack of strength of character or other circumstances, keep inviolate such oaths of membership, he or she, then, has no proper right to become a member. Such persons should decline to affiliate until they can be assured that their membership documents and teachings will receive the privacy, the security, to which they are entitled.

It is also advisable again to admonish members that because one purports, or represents himself to be a Rosicrucian, or even because he gives a password, that is not sufficient reason to entrust him with the monographs or rituals of any Degree. The individual should present an active—that is, *current*—membership card, showing himself to be *in good standing*; he should establish his identity as a member. Without this, his unsupported statement as to his active membership cannot be accepted for reasons of security. Further, before permitting one to

have any monographs, it is necessary for the member to prove that he is *of the Degree* of the monographs which he requests. He should show copies of the monographs of the Degree immediately preceding the one for which he asks. If this cannot be done, then he must obtain a credential on the official stationary of the Grand Lodge of AMORC, which states the Degree to which he has attained. In lieu of these absolute proofs, under one's oath of obligation to AMORC, one should not permit others to have access to his confidential, membership materials.—X

Bowing to Graven Images

Recently, in a Forum conducted by one of our lodges, a frater asked a question which we think worthy of considering at this time. He said: "In the Bible, Exodus 20:4, it is admonished: 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in the heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth.' How are we to interpret this injunction? In the light of our modern times, men and women do not practice idolatry. They create no images as deities. Can we believe, then, that this statement in Exodus has no lesson for our age?"

Men today in our most civilized lands, in our great metropolitan cities, have their *idols* just as did the ancient Philistines, the Hittites, and the Phrygians. They create them as images to displace the divine in their adoration and in their worship. These objects and practices which men have made their idols are not conceived by them to be divinities or gods. Rather, they are images of pleasure, of materialism, idols of fame, fortune, ambition, and power. Men grovel before them, however. They sacrifice to them their moral impulses. They destroy at the foot of such idols those virtues which mankind has long cultivated. They deny the spiritual part of themselves so that these idols of materialism may be served. They exalt these symbols of lust, avarice, and sensuality above Cosmic law. They have made these idols or graven images the supreme god in their lives.

It is not just sufficient that a man say: "Yes, I believe there is a supreme Being, a Universal Intelligence or God," and then, by his living, pay homage to the false gods of

materialism. The man who permits the acquisition of money to so dominate his life that it opposes every moral and social principle, or what is conceived to be the spiritual good, has most certainly created a graven image. A man is religious not only in his affiliation with a sect but also in displaying the religious spirit. What one worships, therefore, as a transcendental power, or recognizes as a supreme good and to which he dedicates and sacrifices his life, constitutes his *personal god*. Our present world is teeming with the votaries of these graven images.

It is natural and proper that man should seek bodily comfort, freedom from mental and physical aggravations. It cannot be denied by any rational person that the content of happiness is in physical and intellectual gratification as well as in the satisfaction of the moral impulse. However, over and beyond all these ideals, these objects or images, which we strive to obtain, there must be a spiritual ideal that corresponds to our moral impulses. Each of us must have enshrined within our consciousness *the God of our Heart*. These other things to which we pay homage must always be in a subordinate relation; they must never supplant or be a substitute for the exalted pleasure of inner communion with what we conceive the supreme power of the universe to be.

The material world may have its golden idols, its prizes and rewards for which men with ambition and initiative will and should strive. For these they pay with labor of body and mind. Never, however, must they sacrifice their humility to the *First Cause*, or think that such material gains are the end of human existence and the summum bonum of life. These material ideals are evanescent. They pass with time. Their glitter is dulled with the enlarged experience. In the more serious conflicts with life they bring little satisfaction or relief from any distress. What man can make, man can destroy. What he can invent, he can make obsolete by new creations. However, no mind has yet risen to the level of answering all the mysteries of existence. Only the fool has ever felt independent of the powers that gave him life and which take it from him. In a peaceful understanding of the God of one's heart is to be found consolation in every situation of life. Call it psychological adjustment, if you will, to the

vicissitudes of our finite existence. Yet, when it is possessed, it is more permanent and gratifying than any collection of things.

Have your images if you must, as we all do: golf, television, movies, cars, books, prominent titles, and a myriad of other particulars. Above them, must be the symbol of the moral sense, that which your being respects as the governing immutable power and intelligence of the universe. If you conceive such to be *the God*, then you will never be a worshipper of graven images.—X

Are Accidents Caused Psychically?

A frater in Pennsylvania now rises to ask a question of our Forum. "Are there psychic locations for accidents? This thought has come to me quite strongly of late. I came upon the idea why so many accidents happen on highways just at certain locations. Now, there may be nothing especially hazardous about the road at that point. It is just that accidents do happen there and frequently. I was wondering whether there might not be some Cosmic influence in the area. I use the word *Cosmic* loosely here, of course. What I mean is, that certainly when people are hurt at a location, they must recall that location; it must be often in their thoughts. If they are killed, perhaps psychically they try to get back to the location—for some reason which we do not thoroughly understand."

Experience has shown that certain areas have been the locale of numerous traffic accidents, even when there was no apparent physical cause. Many suppositions—and superstitions—have been advanced to explain such a phenomenon. The most probable one given, and, of course, wholly materialistic, is that there is a psychological factor involved. Drivers are familiar with the reputation of the area. They recollect all of the accounts, the details of the injuries and deaths that have occurred there, and they become unnerved. Their imagination being thus stimulated, they think they see probable hazards which they attempt to avoid. As a result of lost coordination they lose control of their vehicle and become another victim of the area.

At first, the analysis given may seem exaggerated, but it does revolve around the psychological law of *suggestion*. For example,

we all have had the experience of feeling as though we were going to lose our balance when walking along a ledge ten inches wide that was perhaps ten to fifteen feet above the ground. However, we can walk easily and steadily along a strip of the *same width* if it is on the surface. The height suggests danger and insecurity. Fear inhibits our sense of balance and may actually cause us to fall.

Aside from the possible psychological cause of accidents in definite areas, there is also a much more mysterious cause which is wholly of a *physical* nature. Accompanying our Rosicrucian monographs in one of the early Degrees, there is a special monograph, a *pronunziamento*, which relates to the phenomena of *earth rays* and *currents*. Noted physicists are quoted, also geologists and other scientists, who tell of these mysterious radiations from the earth. It explains how pigeons and other living things are able to "navigate" over great distances by following the courses of these rays. Carrier pigeons, for example, have a faculty of perception which, in effect, functions like radar. Carrier pigeons react to the subtle earth radiations, and by following their "beam," similar to modern aircraft, they are able to pursue the same course with great accuracy in any weather or at night.

Many theories and facts are advanced in the same *Pronunziamento* as to the physical, and of course natural, sources of these earth radiations. They are thought to be the deposits or veins of radioactive minerals. Again, they are believed to be minerals which in some way concentrate or deflect the lines of magnetic force within the earth itself. These currents or, if you wish, magnetic stresses which are generated can be detected by certain living organisms—an ability which nature has provided for their welfare.

In other regions it has been found that no vegetation will grow within an area often not over twenty-five or thirty yards in diameter; beyond such a circle, the vegetation is quite normal. A chemical analysis of the properties of the soil in the nonproductive area has proved it to be no more deficient nor otherwise different from the adjoining soil in which the vegetation flourishes normally. It has been contended that disturbing radiations or earth currents have been the cause of sterility of the soil. Small animals,

such as dogs and cats, have been noticed to avoid crossing such an area; if forcibly placed in that particular spot, the animal would seem to show some physical distress, fleeing as quickly as released.

In one instance concerning a region of this type, human beings have felt a slight tension when standing in the center of the area, or they have felt nothing at all. Of course, the tension experienced by some, may have been due to suggestion. It is interesting to note that modern radiation detecting devices, such as the *Geiger counter*, gave no indication of a perceptual energy. We recall an experience in the high Andes Mountains in the interior of Peru. The altitude was approximately 14,000 feet. Our Rosicrucian Camera Expedition was filming some of the sacred shrines in the cities of the Incas. On this particular promontory overlooking the Cuzco Valley were what was known as the royal Inca baths, or the *Sacred Baths*. These are recumbent monoliths of granite which had been hollowed out to form huge rectangular basins. There were three, each elevated about five feet above the other. They were in such a relationship that the water which gushed from a spring in a crevice of the rock would pour into the top one, then overflow into the one beneath it, and subsequently into the lower basin.

Archaeologists have little to relate about this obvious artifact of the Inca culture, except to say that it was probably used as baths. The Peruvian Indians of the region, descendants of the Incas, have romantic and impressive legends about the baths, however. They are said to be a remnant of a place of lustration, that is, a site used for religious purification, similar to a baptismal font. Perhaps it was used in connection with the initiation of a mystery rite where one was inducted into the wisdom and secret doctrines attributed by some to the Inca priests. At least, the area is venerated by the indigenous Indians, and likewise held in awe by them.

We prepared to take cinema pictures and sought to get an exposure reading with our light meter. We were surprised to find that the hand of the meter failed to respond even though it had worked perfectly at an altitude of 12,000 feet a short time previously. Not wishing to risk an inaccurate exposure for the motion picture film, we contented

ourselves with a still photograph, approximating the light value as best we could.

We returned to the sacred Inca city of Cuzco, situated on the floor of the valley which attains the considerable altitude of 11,500 feet. To our amazement, the light meter functioned satisfactorily! We discarded the theory that the altitude might have in some way affected the delicate mechanism. Previous filming, and subsequent, proved that the meter was unaffected by altitude, and technically there was no reason why it should be so affected. We even resorted to the extra effort of climbing again to the Inca baths and discovered that when we approached within a radius of approximately one hundred feet of them the meter again went "dead." Whether anyone else has had a similar experience in that region previously or since, we have never learned.

We have theorized that some mineral deposits in the vicinity, or even earth currents, temporarily magnetized the delicate mechanism of the meter or in some way affected its photocell. The student of the occult and of psychic phenomena might take the view that since the place was venerated by the Indians, and had been for centuries, it had become a focal point of their thoughts; that is, the concentration of the psychic powers of their combined consciousness had in some way affected the substance in the area so as to create a physical disturbance. The only fault with this supposition is that the Rosicrucian Camera Expedition elsewhere in Peru, as well as in India, Tibet, Siam, Egypt, Iraq, etc., had successfully filmed (with the aid of a meter) sites and objects equally as sacred and venerated.

In cases of severe emotional disturbance as in incidents of grief associated with death and accidents, it has been noticed that material substances—as places and things—have been affected. The human aura, a vibratory radiating energy resulting from the stimulation of the psychic centers, becomes particularly intense from aroused emotions. It would appear that this aura creates a condition which is retained within material substances for an indefinite time. Those who later come in contact with these substances detect, in a psychic manner, these subtle radiations which appear to induce within them sensations or feelings comparable to the ones had by those having experienced the original misfortune.

This explanation, obviously, is not yet possible of empirical confirmation. Physicists as yet have not devised an instrument able to detect in substances which have been touched by, or been contiguous to, individuals suffering great misfortune any electrical radiations of a mysterious nature which might have come from them. Whatever be the characteristics or changes in substances, the result of these subtle radiations of the human aura, they defy any physical means of detection as yet. In other words, examination of the substances does not show anything which would indicate that there is resident in them a force or an energy implanted there as a result of the human aura. In fact, not all humans are sensitive to these, shall we say, aura radiations that may be coming from inanimate substances. The only scientific approach to the subject is along the lines of parapsychology and inquiry into the extrasensory perception of individuals. Science will eventually admit what many persons already *know* from their personal experience that repeated tests under ideal conditions prove that a substantial percentage of a given number of persons respond alike under the same circumstances.

Let us remember that both *hypnotism* and *mental telepathy* were once relegated to the category of superstition and fancy. Now, physical science recognizes the phenomena. Science has satisfactorily explained hypnotism, but regarding mental telepathy, it has not yet found an answer. Nevertheless, science admits the reality of the phenomenon. Students of the esoteric who have long known of the phenomenon have equally as long had a gratifying knowledge of the laws and the principles underlying mental telepathy.

The accidents to which the frater refers could well fall into the category of a psychic phenomenon. A psychic field could have been induced in the surroundings by the great number of accidents that occurred at that particular place—the field being the consequence of the mental as well as the physical distress that resulted in the area. Others, driving along this portion of highway, relaxed and perhaps even in a meditative state, partially subconscious as they habitually drive, could be receptive to the disturbing vibratory radiations. Such could perhaps affect their motor nerves, and the resulting inability to coordinate their actions

might cause the accident. Everyone might not be so affected, just as everyone has not had the experience of mental telepathy or the projection of thought.

We have here offered several explanations of how such accidents might have occurred. It would take an extensive analysis along the lines of scientific methods to determine the true cause. It is, however, a fallacy to *assume* as absolute the nature of the cause without a rational, unbiased investigation. Let us remember that an investigation of psychic phenomena must be analytical, and one must be just as logical in his conclusions as is the materialist in his inquiries.—X

About Non-Mystical Philosophy

A frater of long standing, addressing our Forum, says: "In reading certain types of philosophy such as that of Einstein, Russell, and Whitehead, I frequently encounter propositions which evoke no mystical reaction whatsoever. Is my use of the Rosicrucian technique consequently limited to the intellectual field? Or does the lack of mystical reaction indicate some imperfection in the philosophy? We, as Rosicrucians, do not attempt to define God, since we hold that each person's experience of Him is unique. Does this apply to other phases of truth or reality as well?"

Mysticism is a phase or type of philosophy. It consists of certain general principles and objectives supported by personal experience. Like all philosophy, then, it is a love and a search for an all-inclusive knowledge bringing into a singleness the function and purpose of life. We may put it another way by saying that mystical philosophy is a particular approach to the understanding of the whole of reality. To the mystic, the human consciousness is an extension of the all-pervading universal consciousness of God or Cosmic Mind. To comprehend the unity of all the separate manifestations of reality, which we experience as mass, matter, energy and form, animate and inanimate substance, the human consciousness must be brought into realization of the universal consciousness. The mystic, therefore, approaches the sole reality or God, if you will, not through the analysis of material particulars but by raising his consciousness to a perfect attunement with the omniscient mind. The absolute mystic, then, believes, and has had

experiences which to him confirm his belief, that he will have a flow of intuitive knowledge which will explain the phenomenal world to him.

The Rosicrucian mystic is not a conformist to this traditional mystical approach in every respect. We believe that our Rosicrucian method, the result of proofs revealed during the centuries, is superior. One cannot retreat from life and become a recluse, resorting solely to meditation, and expect to develop a philosophy which serves mankind in a practical sense. Furthermore, one will not come to understand, in every respect, his material environment by doing so. We live in a material and phenomenal world. There are material demands made upon us daily. We cannot escape the impact of mechanical progress and scientific development. We must know something about the sciences and arts of our society and use many of them in our contemporary living. The Rosicrucian, then, finds it necessary to pursue an empirical inquiry into many of the technical fields of his day. Rosicrucians must, in pursuit of a livelihood, become chemists, physicists, astronomers, physicians, lawyers, mechanics, photographers, accountants, printers, engineers, and the like.

The Rosicrucian, whose life is touched by these sciences, arts, and trades, must study the components of which they consist. He must know the facts about them in the way that any other individual does. The distinction between the Rosicrucian and other students of these material subjects is that the former resorts to his mystical philosophy to guide him in his intellection. He is given inspiration, Cosmic enlightenment, a clearer vision, and the stimulation of his faculties through his mystical insight. It is the mystical illumination that integrates or ties together in a comprehensible form the factual knowledge which he may acquire from the usual academic pursuits. We may say that the mystical philosophy is *deductive*. It sets the general order or framework into which the particulars of academic studies may be fitted. The mystical philosophy often reveals the course that an inquiry along wholly materialistic lines should take.

From this, then, we can see that mystical philosophy integrates the results of our observations and the judgments of our reason with Cosmic reality. It permits us to draw

the proper conclusions from what we perceive. Certainly the true meaning of them is as important as the collection of any particulars. It is one thing to perceive something; it is another to understand its proper relationship to all else.

Philosophy, generally, also seeks to unify all knowledge which man has gained through experience. As Hegel taught, the true reality is found only in the significance of the particulars of our experience to the whole into which the experiences must fit. Philosophy likewise attempts to set certain ends as an intellectual path to be followed. It is deductive, the general idea of reality constituting the challenge for science and for empirical knowledge to find the particulars as facts to confirm the idea. The distinction between mystical philosophy and that of other schools of philosophical thought is that the concepts of the latter are arrived at wholly by ratiocination. Philosophy, generally, is a process dependent upon the analysis of experience and the logical deductions drawn therefrom. The mystic, on the other hand, seeks a level of consciousness and experience beyond his objective and subjective powers. He seeks, through the depth of self, to have reflected in him some of the Cosmic intelligence which shall be his guide and counselor. This type of guidance is most commonly known as *intuitive* and it results in a stimulation of the mind, producing what are known as self-evident truths.

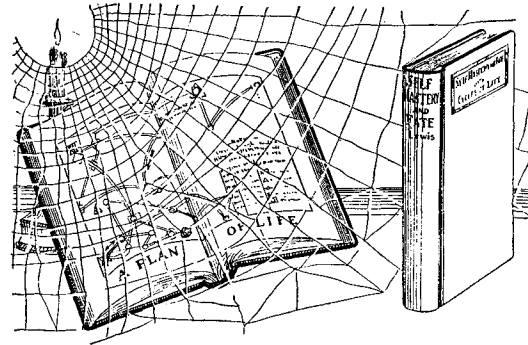
Self-evident truths are not predetermined facts as, for example, mathematical equations, chemical formulae, which, as innate points of knowledge, exist in the Cosmic world. Self-evident truths are the result of a psychological process. The facts of which they consist, as concepts, are born out of the actual experiences which we have had objectively. The psychologist will definitely claim that self-evident truths are not innate Cosmic wisdom that is awakened in the soul. The psychologist is right. The true mystic does not insist that self-evident truths exist in any intact form in the Cosmic. He declares that the psychological process, however, by which self-evident truths occur, is the consequence of a higher phase of consciousness, organizing and developing experience into new ideas on a level *beyond the function of reason*.

Many philosophical works of note are not mystical in content. Consequently, the study of them will, in no way, contribute to a mystical experience, as the frater says. The classical philosophers and noted thinkers of our day should be studied, however, within the limits of one's time and without the sacrifice of one's mystical philosophy. The logic of these thinkers is superb and often cannot be refuted because their conclusions are true—by that we mean, they are in accord with reality. What is truth to the human mind is at least a temporary reality until the mind is able to transcend it. Therefore, such truths are real, no matter through what source they come. When *mystical experience* convinces you, as an individual, that the conclusions of a philosopher are false, then do not accept his postulations, no matter how eminent his views. However, it is not sufficient to have merely a mystical conviction as to a truth. As said, it is then necessary to reduce your Cosmic illumination, your inner conviction, to a logical objective level or it will serve neither you nor anyone else. All the great mystics and religious founders as, for example, Zoroaster, Buddha, and Christ, brought their conceptions into the realm of a livable philosophy.

Though some of the philosophers of our day and of the past may not engender a "mystical reaction" in the one studying their works, often such are the result of mystical enlightenment. In other words, the profound thinker may not write on the subject of mysticism but his clear exposition of his topic indicates that his knowledge was not wholly due to perception and to reasoning. His meditations undoubtedly led him to higher levels of consciousness unintentionally and these his magnificent reasoning comes to reflect. In fact, some of the prominent philosophers of our day, who readily deny that they are mystics, nevertheless concede that the mystical state can result in tremendous revelations which pure reason alone could not attain.

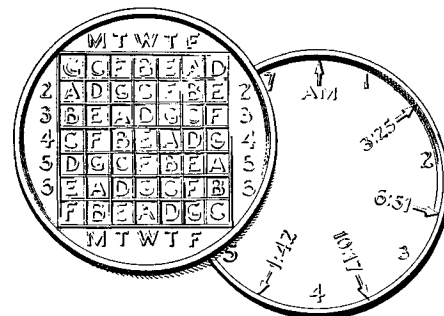
We have had occasion to say elsewhere, and we repeat it now, that not every philosopher is a mystic. Every mystic should, however, also cultivate, as much as he can, the logical thinking which is the virtue of the philosophical mind.—X

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No. 5

MIRACLES

"Why does not God work miracles
As in the days of old
So all men can behold them and
Believe the stories told?"

So spoke the man of little faith
Who blindly plodded on,
Who never saw the starry skies,
Who never saw the dawn;

Who never saw the leafy trees,
Who never felt the heart
That throbs throughout the Universe,
The God within his heart!

—George L. Ahlborn, F. R. C.

Nefertiti Lodge Bulletin, 1949

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FOR MEMBERS ONLY

Greetings!



SIMPLICITY OF PURPOSE

Dear Fratres and Sorores:

The average man and woman stand before the course of life like one at a bazaar which is heavily laden with wares. They hardly know which of the multitude of ends or objectives offered they should select. On all sides, figuratively speaking, are the intellectual and emotional appeals of various philosophical and religious sects. Almost like a vendor hawking his wares, they exhort the people to partake of certain doctrines and methods. In glowing terms, they offer salvation, theories of knowledge, immortality, divine beneficence, and their interpretations of deity. Also, like objects one buys at a public mart, some of these ideas wear well and others are later found to be faulty.

What the average person too often fails to realize is that the numerous things and ways extended to him as ends in life are not positive in themselves. At best they can be but contributions to the fundamental satisfaction in human existence. Long before any one of us pursues a course designed to provide satisfaction, he should have a comprehension of just what that satisfaction constitutes. If we know our goal before we set out upon a journey, we will not burden ourselves with particulars which actually do not help us to attain it. The experienced traveler journeys light. He knows that many things interfere with his travel instead of adding to his comfort, as the inexperienced traveler may imagine.

Let us put aside the traditional and romantic purposes in life which have so long been eulogized. For us, as conscious intelligent beings, what does remain as natural gratifying ends to pursue? All ends may be reduced to only two. The first of these is *health*. It is the perfect state of an organism, the harmonious functioning of its being. If we conceive the human organism as being comparable to a complex mechanical device, then its ideal is to achieve and maintain the harmonious co-ordination of its many parts and systems—or as the engineer would say, the fullest efficiency of the mechanism. Health, then, is the efficient co-ordination

and balance of the entire human organism. This harmony is experienced by man as a condition of well-being, of freedom from aggravation and distress.

Any properly functioning mechanism generates or has a potentiality of producing work. The healthy human organism generates a vitality and excessive energy which must be released or consumed; otherwise, its efficiency is retarded. One plans no task for a complex machine until he is assured that it is operating in a manner capable of performing the work for which it was intended. The mechanic adjusts, tunes and times, his machine to avoid any internal inharmony, for such would then mean loss of power and potentiality of work.

We should not expect less of our own beings than of a machine insofar as deriving the utmost efficiency from ourselves is concerned. The first end in life, upon which all else is contingent, is *health*. It is futile to establish any idealism which will draw upon the productive capacity, physical or mental, of the human organism, unless there is a first concern for health. The youth, the young man or woman, should lay down an intelligent program of a healthful life. They should be guided by accumulated experience as set forth in the instructions and guidance of physicians and physical education directors. Health is its own reward. It must not be construed wholly in terms of future accomplishment. Certainly millions of persons will agree that no satisfactory culmination of any enterprise completely mitigates the suffering and misery of ill-health. At least we can say with assurance that one who has kept the distress of ill-health to a minimum has realized one of the fundamental purposes of human existence.

Unspent energy and vitality cause nervous tension and physical and mental aggravation. For analogy, a powerful motor designed and constructed to accommodate a specific work load, may become damaged if operated to full capacity without being engaged by any load. The work is necessary for the stabilization of the mechanism. So, too, it is with the

human organism. The healthy normal human being must find an outlet for the vitality he is generating through his efficient physical living. Muscular and mental energy is constantly engendered. The majority of lazy persons are not healthy ones. A toxic condition can produce autointoxication to the extent that the individual is lethargic. If one is more inclined to be inactive than active, it is a certainty that he has a lack of vibrant health. Conversely, of course, all active persons are not paragons of health. They may by necessity be driving themselves beyond the efficiency of their organism. The healthy person *wants activity*. There is an ebullient exuberance, and satisfaction is only had in a physical or mental expenditure of the energy.

The second fundamental purpose in life is the pursuit of *peace of mind*. All the things that man aspires to in life, all the expenditures of the healthy, are attempts to acquire this fundamental. Sensual pleasures satisfying the appetites and passions are but functional. They are the result of urges, the gratification of which is intended by nature to establish the physical norm, that is, to maintain health. It is like providing water for an engine when escaping steam indicates the need to replenish it—or to provide oil and grease when a bearing begins to emit smoke. Sensual pleasures are satisfactions that are derived from the return of the human mechanism to its operating order. Peace of mind is derived from harnessing or engaging the productive human power.

Actually health is incomplete without the mind's conceiving a purpose for the integrated human being, that is, for both the mind and body. There must be a dissipation of the energy generated. This consumption of vitality must not be adverse. It should not consist of such activity as would be inimical to the internal harmony of the mechanism. For further analogy, a machine should not be engaged in such work as will eventually retard or destroy its own function. Herein lies a common human problem. Most of the particulars or ends which men pursue in life in the hope of finding peace of mind, though often under some other term, actually impede or destroy their own capacity to attain peace. They engage in pursuits which detrimentally affect their physical or mental health. The objective of

peace of mind must complement and sustain, as much as humanly possible, one's physical well-being.

Obviously, peace of mind is related to *idealism*. This consists of a program of activity from which may be derived the greatest pleasure, which likewise, means a minimum of any kind of distraction as well. How should this be accomplished in a practical way? Though we speak of *self* as though it were a single quality or state of our being, actually it is a composite. The physical configuration of our being, our skeletal structure, organs and systems, is a pronounced self. These are among the elements of our entity of which we are conscious. The emotional and psychic element, the immanent feelings and sentiments, is still another self. The intellectual aspect, the will and reason, is again another self. Each of these has a plethora of its nature, that which represents the full expression of its content. The sensually gratified state, where there is no aggravation of desire existing, constitutes the *ideal* of the physical self. Freedom from anxiety, fears and excessive emotional or psychic stimulation, provides the ideal of the emotional, psychic, and moral self. The intellectual or rational self has its ideal in the realization of an idea, the objectifying of a thought or a plan.

There must be a coherence between these selves and yet they, to an extent, work independently. The individual who seeks health alone leaves ungratified an active mind and an unexpressed emotional and psychic self. Again, the individual who pursues merely an intellectual end, without regard for the physical, moral, and emotional selves, can never realize peace of mind. The end of each self must be established and pursued without interference with the others.

Once you have determined that you have prescribed for yourself a course of life that will, to the extent of your means, contribute to your health, then consider next your emotional and psychic self. What do you need to gratify a sense of moral rectitude, to feel that you are doing and thinking right? What will establish a sense of self-confidence and instil within you an impersonal love? Will love of children, or animals, nature or divine mysteries, bring deep emotional satisfaction and stability? What of the mind and

mental faculties? Can you conceive ends for your imagination and reason logically so as to prepare yourself for a trade, a business or profession? Without intelligent organization of your thoughts, your actions are likely to become disorganized. Disorganized, haphazard living disrupts the separate gratifications of your physical and psychic selves.

Try this deductive process in establishing your purpose in life. Go back to the basic requirements of health and peace of mind. Adjust the particulars of human experience to conform to them. Be certain that there is a harmonious relationship between them. Life can offer you nothing more glorious than *health* and *peace of mind*.

Faternally,

RALPH M. LEWIS,

Imperator.

Our Future Incarnations

A soror, new to our Forum, rises and says: "I sometimes wonder about the next incarnation. Does the time come when we can look forward into our next life and see who we shall be, what we shall do, and so forth?"

What we shall be in our future incarnations and where we shall be born, is not determined in advance Cosmically. We are the creators of our next incarnation while we are in this one. Our thoughts, our deeds, our relationships with others, our ideals and aspirations, as well as our intellectual and spiritual evolution, all determine the next incarnation, just as the next moment is the effect of what you say and do now. Each conscious moment is *causative* and the one that follows from it is an effect. The effect, becomes a cause of still further effects. In each life, then, we forge a link with our next and future incarnations. We can definitely influence the development and course of our next incarnation while in this one. The Rosicrucian monographs, in several of the Degrees, elaborate on the technique by which this mystical process can and has been accomplished. We can but touch upon it briefly here.

First, it is futile for us to attempt, Cosmically, through any exercise of attunement to try to determine what our next incarnation is to be. The reason for this being impossible is quite simple. It is that the life of the next incarnation is still in the forma-

tive stage. It is a *potential* within your present life at this time—you are helping to lay its foundations hourly. Further, if you were to perceive the next incarnation, it would be to the extent of certain causes which you have already laid down. You would be able to see only that certain effects, as laws or conditions, would follow from what you had done up to the present. That future would have no stability because it would be subject to change or mitigation, the consequence of any new acts and thoughts upon your part.

Let us use a simple analogy to make this principle more comprehensible. Suppose you are planning for next year's vacation. You want to visit the mountains. You therefore anticipate the type of clothing you will need at that altitude; you further determine the amount of clothing, depending upon the length of time you will be on holiday. You conceive, as well, what you will want to do while there. Perhaps you have arranged to buy a camera and film so as to photograph any unusual scenery. You may have purchased fishing accessories and some worthwhile book to read during the long pleasant evenings. As you review all these details, it would seem that your holiday is quite an established fact. What you do as causes should produce the results of which you desire your vacation to consist. However, as you well know from experience, events of now could easily change the whole course of your holiday. Your health might make it inadvisable for you to go to a high altitude. Your economic affairs or some other unforeseen demand upon your resources might oblige you to cancel the vacation. Thus the holiday is contingent upon the thought, deeds, and circumstances of the now. It is not a fixed or assured event.

We are told in our monographs that laying the foundation of a future incarnation constitutes more than just wishing, desiring, or, in fact, asking the Cosmic for it. It is a process of *creating* upon your part. You must begin by thinking of the type of life and kind of work you wish to perform. Carefully analyze yourself. What do you know about yourself that, if you could live your life over, you would want to correct or seek to attain? Have you discovered that you would be happier in one of the arts, as music, painting or writing, than in your present work? Perhaps you would prefer research

in some field of science or mechanics. Again, you might desire to pursue an academic life as a teacher or professor. Have you thought that, as a spiritual counselor, mystic or philosopher, you might attain your greatest happiness? Has life shown you that you have a great sympathy for those who are ill and that you have a natural ability to heal others? This might cause you to aspire to become a physician in your next incarnation.

After deciding what you would sincerely like to do in another incarnation, it is necessary that you keep it uppermost as an ideal in your mind. Next comes the gradual preparation and the establishing of causes from which the next life will follow as an effect. If you would like to be a healer, for example, it would be necessary for you to read whatever you can about the human body and its various processes, particularly stressing the healing technique, as given in the Rosicrucian monographs, as a stimulation for your thought. Make the effort also to visit those who are ill. Try to discover what things you can do and say that will, in some way, alleviate their suffering.

Mystically, while in Cosmic attunement in your sanctum, visualize yourself as in another incarnation and as actually assuming the personality and duties of one doing what you desire. Further, ask that you be given the *Cosmic power* to build strength and to develop your character and soul-personality along the lines of the life you wish for your next incarnation. Try, as much as your personal time and studies permit, to assume activities and enter into thoughts that are definitely related to your ideal in the next incarnation. All of this *conditions* your soul-personality for that particular kind of life. It makes you psychically responsive to that kind of existence by arousing and developing those talents which are related to what you desire.

We also have been told in our monographs that the soul-personality, upon the occasion of rebirth, is *attracted* to the body and to those circumstances which will enable it to carry out its plans. For analogy, we may say that the soul-personality is really one pole of a magnet. It draws to it the opposite pole, the material existence, the body, which is of a nature best able to serve. We often use the expression that one is a born mu-

sician, physician, writer, and so forth. Psychologically, we mean that the association areas of a person's brain and consequent talents make him particularly adapted to the work or profession which he has selected. This psychological adjustment is principally due to the fact that the soul-personality was attracted to an organism and to circumstances through which it could best express itself.

Just as we may intentionally form our future incarnations, so too we may unwittingly do so. The individual who harbors racial hatreds, or extreme religious bias, is creating a karmic condition for which he must make compensation. He is assuredly creating a condition where he may have to assume, in the next incarnation, the very race, color, or creed that he now despises and perhaps attacks. He is practically assured, unless he changes his thoughts and actions, of being exposed to the same humility and acrimonious statements and hurts that he has imposed upon others. Those who hold in contempt the opposite sex in business and professional matters, as some males do females, may endure the life of a female, being subject to the same kind of obstructions and restrictions. You cannot want one life for yourself in a future incarnation and, at the same time, think and act quite differently in this one. It is not, as we have said, the desire alone that creates the next incarnation but behavior that is commensurate with it.

It is necessary to think of your soul-personality as the cause of the kind of life you will live in your next incarnation. This soul-personality is plastic. In other words, it is flexible. You must, with the help of the Cosmic, mould it in the form you wish it to express itself now and in the next life. As you can understand from these brief remarks, planning the future incarnation is in many respects like planning for tomorrow in this life. Just as we often find it expedient to alter our plans for tomorrow, so, too, it is often advisable to change our plans for the next incarnation. Each one of us can readily recall that the ambitions of our youth were quite different from what we now think the ideal life would be. Some have realized that what they prepared themselves for in their youth and in their schooling is not what they should have pursued.

Their real love, they have discovered, is perhaps deeper and fuller than the one of the immature concepts of youth. It may be too late to bring about a transition in your affairs in this incarnation but you can, as explained, prepare for the next one.

Our late Imperator, Dr. H. Spencer Lewis, has admirably said in one of our monographs: "There need be no concern for tomorrow, if we live properly today."—X

Convention Visitors

A Rosicrucian Convention consists of many activities and functions. There are special classes for students of all the degrees; thereby, each student gets the opportunity to have personal instruction. He is assured that everyone in that class is in about the same stage of progress as he is. Consequently, the questions asked and answered are almost as personal as a private interview.

In addition to lectures and demonstrations upon subjects of science and mysticism by the officers and faculty members of Rose-Croix University, there are personal interviews. Visitors have the opportunity of speaking to the different staff members of the Department of Instruction. They also meet the Grand and the Supreme Grand Lodge officers with whom they have had correspondence.

A factor that is also important is to meet at Convocations, and on the extensive grounds of Rosicrucian Park, with fratres and sorores from nearly every part of the world. Many Rosicrucians meet others from their own home town—in fact, persons that they did not even realize were Rosicrucians. It is a thrill to meet fratres and sorores from Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Vancouver, Canada—from Johannesburg, South Africa, and from nearly everywhere else. You will find that these members represent every walk of life. Many are from the trades and occupations; others are in professional fields—doctors, nurses, dentists, surgeons, engineers, attorneys; some are artists, craftsmen, writers, and the like.

The 1953 Convention appears to be especially promising in that we will have many distinguished visitors with us. We are expecting the Grand Master General of distant Indonesia, from the island of Java. We shall also have with us the former Deputy

Grand Master of the Order in Italy, Frater Orlando Perrotta. He is coming to us from East Africa where he has been residing for more than a year. He will become a member of our Staff. We will have with us another frater from a distance: a frater from Rhodesia, below the Equator in Africa. This frater will spend some time at Rosicrucian Park preparing himself for special duties for the Order overseas. Inquiries from Central and South America, about the Convention, indicate that we will also have large delegations of fratres and sorores from Latin America.

There are many changes under way in Rosicrucian Park, changes made in some of the existing administration buildings to allow for necessary expansion. There are also fundamental changes being made in the Francis Bacon Auditorium which will be welcomed by all members who have attended previous Conventions. These include the installation of a most modern *refrigerated* air plant; this air conditioning will add considerably to the comfort of all those who attend sessions in the auditorium. There are also basic changes in the lighting systems which will enhance the atmosphere of that historic place.

The Rosicrucian Egyptian, Oriental Museum has also grown by its addition of a number of new exhibits during the past year: beautiful statuary, models of ancient structures, and a fine collection of various rare antiquities. Each of these has an interesting story related to the lives and times of the peoples of centuries ago. These things will all be explained in lectures and in guided tours in which those attending the Convention participate.

The noted artist, Vladimir Tretchikoff, from South Africa (an account of whom appeared in the April issue of the *Rosicrucian Digest*), will have the first exhibit of his American tour in the Rosicrucian Art Gallery during the Convention. His magnificent paintings will be available for inspection by members as well as the public. Shortly after the Convention, Mr. Tretchikoff will begin his tour of the United States, sponsored by A.M.O.R.C., showing his paintings in the principal cities and eventually in Canada. It is expected that his work will receive the same acclaim here as it did in South Africa.

We urge all of you who have not yet

made your plans for the summer, to make every effort to visit Rosicrucian Park during the week of July 12-17 inclusive, the period of the *International Rosicrucian Convention*—even if it constitutes some sacrifice to you, and even if you may never be able to visit again. This will be a memorable experience, one that you will never forget. From an early hour in the morning until well along in the evening, there are activities which appeal to every mind and interest: art, science, philosophy, mysticism, rituals, antiquities, entertainment, sociability—all of these things comprise a Rosicrucian Convention. Plan now to be with us this July.—X

Source of Inspiration

A soror rises to address our Forum. She says: "To be honest, I cannot be sure when I am inspired Cosmically. For example, I may in the springtime read a lot of William Blake, Meister Eckhart, the Bible, etc. During the course of the busy summer I completely lay aside such materials for other necessary studies. Then, behold! in later summer, suddenly, while relaxing under the trees, I feel inspired to write. How can one say whether this is an outcropping from the subconscious of the spring reading, or whether it is Cosmically dictated?"

"There are, it seems to me, three ways in which the subjective mind receives ideas: (1) from the objective mind; (2) from what has been learned in former incarnations; (3) and from the Cosmic. By the time the material is objectified, it is often difficult to tell from what source it is derived. Is there any way to tell?"

First, it is advisable to inquire into what is meant by *inspiration*. At least, we should have that common ground to begin our discussion. In general, an inspiration is an *emotional motivation*. We feel the incentive to perform some act or undertake certain ventures. The idea is accompanied by a feeling of exuberance and excitation. Inspiration is not akin to intuitive knowledge; that is, it is not in any sense the same thing. We are often inspired to some undertaking, but intellectually we may not be certain as to just how we are to realize what we want to achieve. Thus, one may be inspired to paint, and yet have no knowledge of the technique of the art. Conversely, intuitive

knowledge is an immediate and absolute knowledge. The ideas seem to flash into consciousness and they are so complete as to appear to the reason to be self-evident. Rarely is inspiration accompanied by these intuitive flashes.

We are of the opinion that though there is a distinction between inspiration and intuitive or immediate knowledge, yet, at the bottom they may have a somewhat common cause. Inspiration can be aroused through immediate experience, or it may follow as a *delayed response*. If the interval between the cause and the eventual inspiration is long we may not be able to recall what engendered it. The commonest cause of inspiration is the arousing of emotions which are stimulating to the intellect, and the whole then results in a pleasing experience. Instinctively, we are mimics; we learn through mimicry and imitation. This is particularly noticeable with infants and small children. They mimic acts which arouse their curiosity, and in this way they learn. When there is something which we as adults observe and which pleases us, and which so emotionally stimulates us that we are *thrilled* by it, there is then established within us a desire to imitate it. Only actual knowledge of circumstances which inform us that it would be impossible to imitate the act would discourage us from doing so. Otherwise we are particularly encouraged, enthusiastic, or *inspired* to imitate what pleases us. This is especially so if we realize that we have a talent or kind of skill in a similar activity. Thus, persons who have some talent in music are always inspired to practice, or to resume same, when witnessing the performance of an exceptional artist. Where there is no emotional stimulus, there is no inspiration.

There are times when one is relaxed and is not concentrating upon anything which would be likely to arouse emotion, and yet suddenly he feels inspired. An idea flashes into mind and, as he contemplates the idea, that emotional motivation follows which constitutes inspiration. It is this latter type of experience which appears to be more related to intuitive knowledge. It is a well-established fact psychologically, and of course, a familiar one to Rosicrucian students, that all that we perceive objectively, and which we may eventually appear to

forget, is *not* completely lost to us nor dismissed entirely from the mind. Much of the ideation of our experiences is registered in the subjective and subconscious. This is especially so if the ideation when originally had was accompanied by an emotion. The emotional stimulus causes the ideation to become more firmly registered.

If, for analogy, we have been laboring with a problem and have been unable to find a solution for it, we may eventually dismiss it consciously from our thoughts with a feeling of dissatisfaction at our failure. The subconscious, however, resumes the effort to find the solution. In psychological terminology this process is called *unconscious work*. The latent intelligence of the other levels of our mind, according to the Rosicrucian explanation, has been put into activity by the suggestive efforts of the thinking mind. As a result, this intelligence continues after we have stopped our objective efforts, unless of course we have been successful.

This unconscious work consists of an alignment of all of the ideas which may complement, or in some way be sympathetic to, the central idea or problem. In other words, it is a combining and the analysis of all ideas which may have a relationship to the dominant thought which has been transferred to the subconscious. When the apparent solution is reached—that is, when a new idea is prominent and forceful enough to represent the objective sought—it attracts to itself sufficient emotional stimulus to break through into the conscious mind. This, then, is an intuitive flash, which is so comprehensible, so satisfying, that we are immediately inspired by it. This inspiration consists of an enthusiasm for the idea that moves us to act upon whatever it suggests.

Such reading as we may have done in the past, which, at the time, provoked serious thought, but yet did not result in any culmination of ideas, may cause the whole sequence of that thought to be transferred in its incomplete nature to the subconscious mind. The unconscious work then begins. Days after, perhaps even weeks later, as an inspiration, there may come forth into the conscious mind an idea which specifically or only in a general way is related to the subject of the original reading matter. For analogy, one may read a classic poem which

causes a keen appreciation on his part of some of the phenomena of nature and its mysteries. Accompanying this is a strong emotion, the desire to know more of nature, to probe beneath the surface of daily experience. Some time after the reading, he may suddenly be inspired to write a brief essay on something in nature which he has observed and to which he had previously given little thought. Fortunately for us, the subjective and subconscious processes are quite tireless, or else this factor of unconscious work could not serve us.

Wherein, one may wonder, is the distinction between these subconscious processes and what mystics and we Rosicrucians call *Cosmic inspiration*? It is difficult for us to determine the difference between these kinds of inspiration. Inspiration from the Cosmic and the one which comes as a result of the delayed response, or the unconscious work—insofar as their effects upon the conscious mind are concerned—may be more or less the same. To use a homely analogy, it is like one who suddenly sees a glow on the horizon of a night sky. What caused the glow one may never know, yet the glow is there. Further, whatever value it may have is more or less the same regardless of what caused it.

Cosmic inspiration usually follows meditation, at which time we free the consciousness from the objective self. Its nature depends upon the extent that our meditation causes us to reach into the various upper levels of the spectrum of consciousness. The higher we ascend in consciousness, the more we embrace the harmony of that greater reality which we call *the Cosmic*. The vibratory impulses of this psychic contact stimulate the various levels of consciousness. This stimulated consciousness draws to itself all complementary ideas, all noble thoughts, all ideas which we have had in the past and which, at the time, surrounded themselves with sensations gratifying to the higher self. These finer ideas then are reassembled in the subconscious and manifest themselves as a lofty *inspiring* thought, or some seemingly new idea. The thought in quality, in its synthesized form, is perhaps quite unlike anything we may have ever experienced. The elements of it, that of which it is composed, are so merged harmoniously that their origin and familiar nature are not recognized

by us. Consequently, the whole idea has the character of a complete, new thought transplanted in our minds in its entirety from out of the Cosmic. There are just those Cosmic vibratory forces which engender from the elements of human experience the inspired ideas which we have. Human knowledge is the building material, the substance, if you will, out of which Cosmic inspiration or intelligence takes its objective form—X

Fear of Examinations

A member recently requested that we discuss in the Forum the problem of fear, and that particularly the fear of examinations be emphasized. The member stated that in looking through the Forum and in other Rosicrucian literature she has failed to find a really good answer to the perennial question as to what to do about the fear of examinations. She then specified that kind of fear that makes a student forget what he really does know, so that he actually completes an examination with a poor showing in spite of the fact that the knowledge was there. I presume, therefore, that this member is not concerned with the individual who does not study or prepare properly for an examination. It is true that many people are unable to do their best under circumstances such as that of writing down facts that they had learned previously.

A number of years ago when I was teaching school, I found that there were certain students who had to be graded not exclusively upon the basis of what they wrote in an examination, but upon the basis of their attitude toward their study and their general attitude as indicated by other periods of the day during the school term or semester. These individuals developed almost a state of panic when it became necessary to write the answers to an examination; whereas, if they could express themselves freely, they would have no trouble in producing evidence that they had gained knowledge from their studying.

Obviously, a question arises as to whether or not an examination is a true test of an individual's knowledge. This depends, insofar as the answer to that question is concerned, upon the individual. Many people can give an answer to a question under any circumstance, regardless of whether it is an

examination, a casual question, or whether or not they are under any kind of pressure. Others are unable to formulate their ideas into words or to write those words down properly if they are under any type of stress. The stress upon which a person might base fear is probably due to the desire that he be recognized as having gained the information and knowledge for which he has studied and that this fact be evidenced in the results of the examination. Such students fear self-pity and the pity of others for them. They are afraid that they will be unable to impress upon someone else that which they know they had expended effort to attain.

Sometimes the fear is purely an emotional complex, they do not know exactly what they are afraid of. This type of fear is related to stage fright where the child or even the adult may be unable to remember a thing that has previously been committed to memory. The problem of fear in general concerns itself with one of the most intense of all emotional experiences. Excessive fear is an emotion that is the basis for much disaster from both an individual and a social standpoint. No one can do his best under circumstances, whether it be an examination or whether it be in any other thing that he is called upon to do, when he is overcome by the feeling of fear.

Fear, when it is established in consciousness, becomes insidious and intense—it gnaws into us like termites gnaw into wood—it undermines every rational thought that should come to our rescue and take the place of the feeling of fear. Not all fear, however, is useless. Fear has a biological basis. If it were not for the emotion of fear, we might not preserve ourselves against injury, we might not take proper precaution insofar as ordinary common-sense safety measures are concerned. Self-preservation requires that fear be an existent emotion. To that extent, fear must be taken into consideration as being a function of the mind that affects the body. Through fear, sometimes unexplainable, we are able to avoid actual damage or harm to our physical being. But when fear becomes an all-powerful part of our thinking, it replaces judgment and reason just as any emotion can overrule the reason of the individual.

When an individual is functioning entire-

ly by emotion, his behavior and actions become unpredictable. What a man might do under the stress of an emotional circumstance is entirely different from what he might do if he were reasoning each action or each step of an action as he proceeded through the act that he had in mind. You and I might say what we would do under certain circumstances. We can analyze those circumstances in the cool light of reason as it exists at the moment, and we can say that if such and such a thing happened we would react in these ways, and enumerate them. But actually, we do not know what we would do, we do not know what emotional upheavals might come into our consciousness that would change or eradicate the reason that would normally be our guide. That is why in many accidents the individual freely admits that he did not know what he was doing. An individual in an automobile may freeze to the steering wheel, for example, when he should be acting in some other way; or the individual may fail to put on the brake, or stop the car, or do something else that reason would normally dictate should be done. In such case, it would usually be the emotion of fear that would interfere with the act of reason. When fear predominates thinking, it in the end does modify behavior. It may not change external circumstances in the least, but it does change our reaction to any circumstance, or to any stimulation. Fear, however, if carried to the extreme, causes us to concentrate on ourselves; it causes us to be too concerned with ourselves. We then become overly sensitive to any situation either outside of us or within our own thinking. Fear, carried to an extreme, is a selfish emotion. It causes us to forget that others have rights, needs, wants, hopes, desires, and that if we would devote ourselves to some extent to the needs of other individuals our own fears might be subordinated.

Theories about fear do not answer our fundamental question. How can knowledge replace fear? In the first place, one of the fundamental fears on the part of man is the fear of the unknown. Assuredness, self-assurance, and the actual assimilation of facts help replace fear. If we are confident of the information we possess, fear can, by developing the habit of the exertion of will power, cause us to reassert ourselves and

take control of an emotional situation. The individual who sits down to an examination whether it be a civil-service one, in a school, or anywhere else, may prepare himself by proper concentration and meditation in advance and thereby direct his consciousness toward the task at hand.

It would be well for anyone who is sensitive to the idea of examinations to learn the simple steps of concentration and visualization. He knows that he knows the answers to most of the questions that are asked about the subject upon which the examination will be taken. He should, therefore, instead of worrying about it, instead of anticipating failure, disaster, or trouble, visualize himself as confidently writing the answers to the questions asked. This is truly a subconscious suggestion, but it will come to the rescue of the individual when the time to write those questions comes. It is easy to say there is nothing to fear, or there is no use to fear. But it is hard to replace a system of habit dominated by fear or by any other emotion with a systematic process of reasoning. It is something that has to be developed. Through some strange experience in our past life, or in past lives as far as that is concerned, we may have made ourselves susceptible to emotional control of our reason, but we can, by a process of education and direction, redirect our thinking and come to realize that proper preparation and concentration can assist us in advance to utilize our reason instead of allowing emotion to control it.

The next time that you are faced with a situation such as taking an examination or performing some other act that causes you to hesitate, or to be afraid, or to not know how to proceed, take a few minutes quietly by yourself; sit down, relax, visualize yourself doing what you should do and in the way you want to do it. Then when the time comes for the task, whatever it may be, although you may from habit have some of the feeling of fear or hesitancy that you have evidenced in the past, you will find that the power of the subconscious mind in which you have planted this prior suggestion will take over. The emotion will take second place, your reason will come back, and you will be successful in the task that is before you. Make this test yourself. You can learn that just as you have created a

habit of permitting fear to interfere with reason, you can create a habit of letting reason take command over fear when it is a matter that is primarily concerned with knowledge.

Do not think, however, that you can give up study—you must prepare yourself; you must have the knowledge. Then, through proper training and concentration, confidence and reason can be given control of your mental activities for the actual test. This application of the principles of concentration and meditation will leave the way open for the manifestation of laws which you may see only in part because of your finite vision and limited range of concept.—A

Psychology of Prayer

We have several interesting questions from fratres who now rise to address our Forum. Their questions are related to the same subject. One of these fratres is from Nigeria, Africa. The following question asked by the frater who is now before us is typical of the others. He says: "If the universal laws under which we live and have our being are and have been unchanged since the beginning of time, of what value is a prayer for forgiveness when one has transgressed these laws? Further, if there is no personal god, to whom does one pray for assistance, forgiveness, etc.?"

Fundamentally, a prayer is an appeal or desire which is made vocative, that is, expressed aloud or in writing. Obviously, the intent is to direct such an appeal, as a petition, to someone or to something. In this Forum and elsewhere, we have rather frequently set forth the basic classifications of prayer. All prayers fall within three specific categories. Generally, they are: First, prayers of *intercession*, petitions that a Supreme Power, human or supernatural, intercede in behalf of the petitioner. Second, there are prayers of *confession* and *atonement*. The petitioner declares his wrongs to the superior he conceives of, and seeks to expiate them. The third general category of prayers includes those of *exaltation*. They are similar to the psalms in the Bible, where the individual extols the greatness of the deity, sings his glories.

Among primitive peoples—and those who

are primitive in their thinking—the deity is commonly anthropomorphic, a personal humanlike being. He is a god that can be assuaged by confession and appealed to by pleas of mercy. He is often thought vain enough, according to such conceptions, as to find pleasure in the glories sung of him by mortals. If man violates a precept of his own conscience or a prescribed religious doctrine constituting, in his mind at least, a divine law, he prays for forgiveness from this personal god. This petition principally requests immunity to any effect that might follow from the law violated. The whole reasoning is based upon the premise of an arbitrary control of natural phenomena by the being appealed to.

The modern scientist and the modern mystic alike cannot accept the premise of a personal god and an arbitrary fiat by him, setting aside the consequences of natural law. The very divine equality, which the religionist expects from his god, obviates such exceptions and immunities under any circumstances. The very intervention with the effects of a natural law, which one would plead for, may be appealed against by an equally devout person elsewhere and simultaneously. To the scientist, the pragmatic goodness of Cosmic or natural law is to be found in its immutability and uniformity. To the mystic, the goodness of Cosmic law exists in its being exacted against all persons alike.

The loss of confidence in prayer, so much evidenced today in different societies, is the direct result of numerous experiences of non-response. The individual, in thinking of his own immediate welfare and coming before his god as a personal being, whom he thinks of as having all the foibles, prejudices, and preferences of human beings, makes most of his prayers impossible of fulfillment. However, prayer has not lost its efficacy if it is applied in the light of the enlarged modern understanding.

The first psychological value of prayer is that it consists of a catharsis. The individual ego purges itself of its attitude of complete independence and of dominant self-sufficiency. One excoriates his false vanity by crying out for aid and asking for intercession, thereby admitting a power that transcends his own. Instead of continuing at a tangent to the Cosmic order, prayer, like a centrip-

etal force, returns the consciousness of the human being back to the center of his own being. The prayer is an appeal from the psychic and emotional nature of man rather than from his rational and objective self. Prayers of confession constitute an admission of insufficiency and inadequacy. Thereby they prepare the individual for an infusion of new power which he has formerly denied or never realized.

Prayer destroys inhibitions and removes confining blocks in the personality and mental make-up that the will may have established. As a result, the individual permits a flow of the subliminal impressions of the other selves or levels of his subconscious to flow through his conscious mind. The inspiration which he subsequently receives, the influx of renewed confidence, causes him to feel that the deity has at that time interceded and made an exception for him. Usually such is a noetic experience. When fears have been banished, circumstances are more clearly evaluated by a calmer mind. There is, then, what seems to be an effulgence of inner light or *new knowledge*. In a sense, this is true because the individual is able to draw more fully upon the inner and Cosmic content of his own being. The orthodox religionist, of course, if he has this experience, attributes the beneficent effect to the arbitrary fiat or command of God in his behalf.

An individual who has violated natural law cannot expect a suspension of Cosmic order in his behalf, no matter how fervent and sincere his prayer. His prayer can and should take the form of a petition to the depths of his own being. This is not sacrilegious, for implanted within us is a spark of the infinite intelligence and order. God is not beyond but, as the mystical pantheist affirms, *within all things*. The center of the divine is everywhere. This prayer should not be a plea for intervention or an alleviation of any suffering we may have incurred because of our acts. Rather, it should be an admission to the innermost state of our own consciousness: "I have erred. I am guilty of violating what, to the best of my mortal knowledge, I know to be the right." This should be followed by the inner statement of self to self that one be given the strength and courage to endure the consequences of one's own acts. Further, one should ask that

there be indelibly impressed upon his mind and upon the whole of his states of consciousness the lesson of the experience.

By this mystical process the individual places himself in full dependence upon the Cosmic powers, which are resident within him. He seeks to attune with the infinite directly through the nearest channel, that is, the divine content of his own being. His passive receptive state, his sincere humility, causes to be drawn to him from the recesses of his own spiritual nature the inherent strength and intuitive guidance which he needs. Often it may appear that the effect of the violation which one feared or had reason to expect, never comes to pass after such a mystical communion or prayer such as this. It is because of the regeneration of the individual, his new power and resistance to what otherwise would have been a more severe psychic shock and mental torment.

It might be asked: If one sincerely prays to what he believes to be a personal deity who, he expects, will listen to his actual words and intercede in his behalf, more or less as one would to some supreme earthly ruler, will he not receive the same results? Certainly, many have thus prayed with such a conception of God and His powers and received what to them were blessings. The mystical and psychological principles and laws involved in the act of prayer are not changed, no matter how one may conceive his god or believe in the function of Cosmic law. Therefore, an accidental combination of the right elements for the full efficacy of prayer may be at times as productive of results as those more intelligently applied. However, accidents are bad risks. It is far better to *know* what should be done in the use of prayer and what is more efficacious. In this way, the ratio of success in prayer is much higher.

Prayers are often impersonal; that is, they are not in the interest of our own immediate selves but are for the extended self which includes other things and persons in the circle of self-interest. These are the prayers for a nation, for other peoples or for some cause. Nevertheless, even in this type of prayer, the psychological principles of prayer are applicable also. Through the introverting of our consciousness to the depths of our own being by the procedure of prayer and by the sheer psychical *motivation* of an impersonal

love, we are brought into closer attunement with the more profound and exalted levels of the selves of our being. What we term *intuitive impulses* flood our consciousness. We seem to be guided and instructed as ideas flow to the mind. For these ideas frequently make it possible for us to devise ways and means of helping those or that for which we pray.

The freedom of inhibitions that comes through such prayer and the domination of our consciousness by the thought of the one about whom we pray put us contiguous to that individual's mind. We come to realize, subconsciously, his thoughts and to have a more intelligent understanding of his condition. The pouring forth of this psychic energy from ourselves through the Cosmic to the object of our interest often stimulates the psychic centers of the other person. As a result, such a one may often say, "Your prayers have helped. I feel freer and I have experienced a kind of regeneration of mind." As a result, the individual often actually begins to do things for himself which formerly he believed himself incapable of accomplishing.

What are often thought to be insurmountable conditions, stifling all progress and effort, can be removed through the medium of prayer. Those who do not understand the mystical principles involved may think that the evident relief from the oppressive condition was caused by its dissolution as the result of a direct act or fiat of God. Actually, what often occurs is that prayer has enlarged the mental horizon, given a closer insight into the offending circumstances, and removed the psychological block of helplessness that inhibits one's own Cosmic power. The problem, then, has not actually been dissolved by any external power, but it is understood, is faced with fortitude, and its solution readily realized and accomplished.

Prayer, therefore, is as essential in our times as in any period of history. Prayer is not necessarily, as some believe, an inheritance from earlier superstitious eras. It is so, only if we refuse to look upon prayer with the full significance of modern mysticism and modern science.—X

Is Death a Blessing?

A soror in Canada now stands before our Forum to ask a question. "A question has troubled me for quite a long time, and so it is being asked with the hope that perhaps it might be answered for me. The Rosicrucian books and the *Rosicrucian Digest* seem to imply that natural transition (not suicide) is a great blessing, a higher initiation, and that it frees from pain, worry, grief, and strife. But let us take a hypothetical case of two people. One passes through transition hastened by much wrong-thinking and having no knowledge of Rosicrucianism. The other one, living on this plane, lives a Christlike life to the best of his ability, conforming to the Rosicrucian principles. Which of the two individuals, would you say, has received the greater blessing?"

The point which the soror is making is whether death is a greater reward than life. If so, then why do unscrupulous, immoral persons pass through transition, freed from worry and strife, and those who live a more noble and continent life on this plane have to endure its turbulence? In our Rosicrucian teachings, we do not say, nor do we mean to imply, that the experience of death is a more important one than that of life. Death is part of a great cycle. It is just as the vertex or crest of a wave motion is equal to its valley, or concave section. We would not have such a thing as a wave were there not both the crest and the valley. Though different phenomena, for instance in the undulating wave of electrical radiation, may occur for the crest than for the valley, yet it is man who determines their relative importance. So, too, man, in his religions and philosophies ascribes varying importance to each aspect of the great cycle, namely, either to death or to life.

In life we are conscious of the instinctive urge to persist since it is inherent within the life force. Every manifestation strives *to be*. Being is action. Life endeavors to retain those characteristics which are immanent in even the simplest living organism. In man we realize this desire for self-preservation. The only existence of which we are objectively aware is this one. It is quite natural, then, that man should fear the objective discontinuance of his own being. To most men, life is the only form of their

own being in which they have any confidence. Men have viewed the dead; they have noted the dormancy of all those faculties on which they depend in their living state and upon which they pride themselves. Further, they have observed the dissolution of the body. It is to be expected, therefore, that they will resist death as long as they can. Added to this urge to live, for the advantages of life itself, are also the numerous fears of death which have been heightened by superstitions and by the many religious doctrines which indirectly imply the horrors to follow death.

From the mystical point of view that phase of the Cosmic cycle which we know as "life" is *most* important to the evolution of the soul-personality. It is on this plane that the sublimation of the consciousness is had. The divine consciousness expresses itself through the mortal mind. Its expression is fashioned by the psychic and the emotional characteristics of our being, and by environmental factors. The personality or *self* is thus a combination of all of these factors. As the self expands, it learns to distinguish between the various influences which are directed to it. Through will, the great expressive instrument of self, the latter comes to heed more and more of the divine impulses from within the depth of consciousness. Gradually then, the soul-personality conforms more to the universal soul, or to the divine consciousness within man. Self, as we know it, does not exist in the Cosmic because most of those elements of which it is ordinarily composed, here in mortal existence, are not resident outside of the physical organism. Therefore, it is during the life span that we can have a profound insight into the spiritual essence of our being and truly evolve the self.

Obviously, from this point of view, as from any rational aspect, the mystic, the Rosicrucian, considers life, the span of earth existence, of the greatest importance to the human. However, death is the consequence of the *law of change*. It is the ever-becoming. Nothing is static in the whole of the Cosmic. Whatever appears to be so is only relative. Granite goes through change although that change may often be imperceptible to us. Wind and the elements will erode the hardest stone. Worlds and planets, as our earth, go through change, even

though in the life of mankind or the life of the human race such changes may not be noticeable. Consequently, if we consider life as the crest of the wave—that is, as only part of the cycle—then death—the valley of the wave—must follow by necessity to complete the cycle.

Actually, there is no horror in the experience of death. We may rightly fear pain or suffering which often precedes it. The change or loss of mortal consciousness of which death consists is not painful, nor does it imply a dreadful experience to follow life. The normal person thinks of death in terms of the abandonment of living. To him, life is all; and, therefore, death is the end. It is *not* the end but only the conclusion of one aspect of a cycle. For analogy, one who may have been reared in the mountains, and to whom such a life is the essence of existence, might believe later that his being obliged to live on the desert or upon a plain is a torment and a useless existence. We, of course, know that he would be wrong in this evaluation.

Rosicrucians teach and mystics know that death is often truly a blessing. Death frequently means a relief from untold suffering. It also affords another beginning rather than the ending of all existence. Rosicrucians also know that death is not the beginning of a period of retribution and punishment. These things can be realized only by the mortal consciousness, and that means that they are experienced on this plane of existence, and are the result of our acts here—or, if not in this span, in that of another life span.

The Cosmic cycle of birth, life, and death, constitutes elements of initiation, if we mean by that "learning" and progressive development. Death is part of this initiation which we must all pass through. However, to seek death for itself is as Cosmically wrong as to think, as some do, that all of existence is confined to our consciousness of reality during this one life. One must prepare himself mystically and psychologically for death—just as one does for life. We should resign ourselves to death, for it is inevitable. It is not a punishment, it is but a transition. This life is not all there is to the great cycle, so death begins the other phase of the cycle. Death can be a blessing but cer-

tainly no more so than intelligent, moral, and inspired living.

To answer the question submitted specifically, a life of understanding, of usefulness and of aspiration to unfold the self, is more blessed than transition or death in itself. Life and death both have their natural functions as part of the Cosmic cycle. The human ego and the intellect can heighten these advantages by proper emphasis and significance being placed upon them. If we think of life as the opportunity—which it is—for the fuller expression of self and live accordingly, then life becomes truly a glorious period of existence. At the same time, we should look upon death as retirement, like one finishing a day's labor well done. The night does not necessarily rob us of the day. It brings a conclusion to it and provides that change which we call *rest*, so that we may again labor fruitfully another day.—X

What Causes Human Cruelty?

A soror from England says: "I have been wondering if there is any reasonable answer to what appears to be the inherent wickedness of mankind. For instance, from whence comes the savage instinct of cruelty which from time to time seeks some outlet in so-called civilized man? There are the examples of the shocking cruelty shown by persons toward others who are weaker than they are.

"God created everything in the universe. Surely He foresaw the eventual unfolding of all His works. Is this facet of cruelty and injustice in man part of the Divine plan? Why is the inner and Divine part of man so easily submerged by grosser instincts?"

If we think of human conduct in terms of *determinism* or as a Divine direction or plan, we then find ourselves precipitated into a mire of inconsistencies and confusion. Human conduct is independent of what we refer to as the will of God. We and the Cosmic laws, as forces and agencies, determine our own actions. What we do is not by the consequence of Divine intention. To imagine other than this necessitates the belief in fatalism and that man's acts are pre-determined for him and that, in fact, he is exclusively a puppet of higher forces. With such reasoning, moral will or conscience would be of no avail. Why should man con-

form to a moral standard, if he is nevertheless destined to be cruel and immoral? Why would one aspire to other than he is, if he cannot escape a course predetermined for his life?

We must, to be consistent, presume that the creative act of the Divine Being was to imbue us with a mechanism, that is, a mind and body, motivated by the force of Divine Intelligence. This unit, or *ourselves*, is one of many units of living and of inanimate things set within a sphere of forces which we call *the universe at large*. There can be and there is, of course, a harmony or relationship between these many units of which we are one. The mind of man can discern this relationship. As it evolves, so evolve its comprehension of natural law, the understanding of its own nature, and those realities surrounding it. Goodness and evil, happiness and pain, are but the consequence of the human being's properly integrating himself with the elements of his own nature and environment. The Divine Mind made it possible for man to experience the good, or what we call the *good*, namely, harmony with creation and its manifestations. It also made it possible for man to be what we call *evil* and to suffer accordingly.

A physical organism can evolve, that is, reach a more complex or developed state, without realization of its evolution. The self, the moral consciousness, however, cannot evolve without realizing that it has done so, because moral consciousness consists of a realization of self and of self's actions. One cannot aspire to virtue without first being cognizant of what is termed *evil*. We are thus given that much independence in the pursuit of our desires as to be able to experience both pleasure and pain and to strive for moral ends as against iniquity.

Cruelty is frequently the result, not of a lack of realization of good and evil, but of pathological causes or imperfections within the human organism. Cruelty can be as much the result of a physical disorder as is impaired eyesight or defective hearing. Many persons who are cruel are sadists. They find sexual satisfaction and intense pleasure in inflicting pain or torment upon other living things. This experience is gratifying to them just as virtuous deeds or acts of rectitude are gratifying to the moral sense of normal persons. These unfortunate persons are ill and

they need the help of their fellows. During their period of treatment they may need to be restrained so as not to inflict harm upon others. What they do is certainly not the result of a Divine decree or plan. Most of the time, they are not in violation of any personal moral standard. It is not a question, we repeat, of good or evil with them.

Often, too, sadism arises from environmental conditions which have greatly disturbed the emotions and distorted the personality. For analogy, children who have been neglected by parents or guardians or who have never known happiness through kindness and care, and in fact may have been abused, may eventually come to strike back at society. They find satisfaction in retaliation against others, in bringing to them pain and suffering similar to what they have personally experienced. In most instances, this extreme cruelty is a distorted sense of pleasure.

With the normal person, the self extends beyond one's own immediate welfare. Most of us include in the interests of self those persons or classes of persons that engender within us a sympathetic feeling. Thus we dislike seeing children subjected to abuse or mistreatment. All children are sympathetically related to our own paternal sense or to those children whom we particularly like. The offense against any children is sympathetically realized, then, as an offense against those children to whom we have a special attachment. In other words, it is a kind of parallel feeling. Thus an experience of the mistreatment of a child induces within the normal person all those feelings he would have if children closer to him were to undergo similar treatment.

The emotionally matured and psychically developed person has, therefore, a self that embraces in its feelings and sentiments more than his own person. Conversely, then, the restricted self, as the primitive person, often has a limited compassion. He experiences no mental pain or torment except those sensations which come as a result of something directly inflicted upon his own person. Such types of persons will abuse animals and all others who cannot defend themselves against them.

What the mystic calls *self-consciousness* means more than an awareness of our own entity as distinguished from other things.

There can be acquired a *hypersensitivity* to vibrations of a higher frequency which are not ordinarily perceived by the receptor senses and which can truly be referred to as psychic. Thus man can come to realize symmetry in art, harmony in music, and develop an advanced aesthetic sense. He can also have a profound appreciation of the finer and more subtle social relations. Then, again, he may have, in addition, a mystical consciousness amounting to a deep love for spiritual values. This kind of self-consciousness results in man's being aware of the finer and subtler impressions that actuate his sympathetic nervous system and which are more closely attuned with the higher Cosmic forces. This nervous system responds to those impulses which transcend the grosser manifestations or more primitive ones of our physical existence. Those who learn and practice introverting their consciousness gradually become aware of these finer higher vibrations of their own being and they experience exalted pleasures that the sensual person never comes to know. Life to these persons is far richer. The sensibilities of these individuals are often shocked, and they exhibit mental anguish at displays of cruelty and coarseness. Such sensations the less evolved person would not experience.

The cultured person, the one who cultivates these higher levels of consciousness, is the one who also advances society. He is the one who contributes to the refinement of the human race. The primitive person, motivated strictly by the lower and essential animal instincts, has not those finer feelings of compassion about the hurt his actions may bring to others. It must not be thought, however, that just one who loves music and is proficient in it or in art of any kind, or who has an extensive academic training or is very intelligent, is necessarily also one who is responsive to the higher levels of his consciousness. A talent for music or art, for example, means a particular development which may be congenital, of the association areas of the brain related to that talent. However, such an individual may not have that sensitivity which would make him a humanitarian and cause a deep sympathy for his fellows. The real humanitarian and mystic is one who is responsive to impressions from *all* of the levels of his consciousness. He is emotionally and psychically

well balanced. He reacts to impulses from the full range of octaves of the vibrations of his being. Consequently, what such a person interprets as good is of a more expansive nature than that interpreted by one to whom good is only a sensual pleasure.

Until a greater number of the world's populace has reached this state of awakening and is responsive to the higher aspects of self, we must expect from society further brutality and atavistic conduct. The average person is exceedingly primitive beneath the veneer of conditioning to restraint. This restraint is mostly fear of retribution for one's own wrong conduct rather than the result of any real compunction against wrongdoing. Millions of persons will allow the most primitive instincts of self-interest to dominate them when freed of the restraint of conventions or legal prohibitions. Cultivating the sensitivity of self brings about a great *self-discipline*. We then set for ourselves proscriptions which we *will* ourselves to respect. We do so under the motivation of idealism instead of conforming merely to custom or public censure.—X

The Law of Amra

Little phrases and practices may often represent tremendous truths which men have gleaned in the past and lessons they have learned. One of these is the ancient practice of *tithing*. The word *tithing* originated from *tithe*, meaning a *tenth* of anything. Among the Ancients, taxes were paid either in money or in crops or cattle to the extent of one tenth of the estimated value of the taxpayer's property or of his annual income. Subsequently, the early Christian church levied a tax of a tenth of the annual income of its members for the support of its activities. This levy became known as tithing.

All tithing, however, was not compulsory, as were taxes. Among the members of the mystery schools of antiquity, and even later, each award in life, each pleasure or bounty which one received, was, in principle, thought to impose a moral obligation upon the recipient to make adequate compensation in return. The mystical concept was that there is no justice where there is no true equality. Each must share the goodness of life. No man should be morally indebted to another. Therefore, if you received a good

or were the recipient of a beneficent act, you were in like manner to assist someone else. Not to do so would imply that you had arrested the course of goodness, that you had caused it to stop with you. Further, it was thought that, by such conduct, you would not be considered worthy of further benefits from the Cosmic. Consequently, each time one was benefited, he was then obliged to confer, in some manner, a goodness, if not in kind at least in spirit, on another.

Mystically, the custom became known as the Law of AMRA. This law or its principle is succinctly explained in the brochure issued by the A.M.O.R.C., entitled *The Cathedral of the Soul*. Therein it is stated: "There is an ancient custom, found in all the old Rosicrucian records, called the Law of AMRA. This law became a sacred doctrine with the Egyptian people, and later with the Jews in their religious practices. It was finally adopted by branches of the Christian church. It was originally a mystical law, although many modern forms of religion have turned it into a purely material law. The Law of AMRA is this: If you pray to God or petition the Masters for any special help in sickness, worry, trial, tribulation, or poverty, and your prayer or petition is answered, you are obligated to make compensation not alone by prayers and thankfulness but by *passing along to others* some portion of the blessing you have received.

"If you have asked for an improvement in your health, relief from pain or suffering, the gift of some material thing, or help in your business and social position, then, according to the Law of AMRA, you should *tithe* yourself either by setting aside a small amount of money or of some material element which can be used to make some other person happy and at peace with the world. Unless this is done *each time* you receive a blessing through the Cathedral (Cathedral of the Soul), you cannot rightfully petition in the future for any other blessing."

That this mystical law does bring satisfaction to the individual that conforms to it, is evidenced by the many members who respond to it. An example of this inner compensation, the result of tithing, is given in the remarks from a member in the State of

Michigan. The soror states: "I would recommend that anyone appeal to the Council of Solace sometime if for no other reason than to receive the little AMRA box. A thrill went through me the first time a coin was dropped in. It instantly seemed to form a new connection of some kind. Considering it, I recalled that a number of times I had been told to share, and had had this demonstrated in different ways, by pictures. Naturally, I donate along with others to various causes, but this is something special, intimate, and difficult to express. You understand, without a doubt. A day or so ago, when thinking of money and what I had to do with it, the Voice whispered, 'And a little bit for me.' I felt like putting the whole pay check into the box. It may be just a little box, but it represents a tremendous law."

Cosmically, we do truly create a favorable condition for ourselves by intelligent charitable contributions, no matter how small the amount. By that means we set into motion a karmic benevolent law, the effects of which redound to our benefit. To use a homely analogy, in giving we create within our own resources a certain vacuum to be filled. However, what returns to us, mystically, as a result of our gift, is of far greater extent than what we gave. Therefore, the vacuum is more than filled. It overflows. Sometimes what redounds to our benefit is of the same kind as what we gave, money or service, and it comes when we need it most and usually least expect it. At other times, the reward we receive mystically is in the form of advice, friendship, loyalty, and kindness, when those things are most important to us. Then, too, we must not fail to take into consideration the great inner satisfaction derived from the realization that, through our gift, no matter how simple, and through tithing ourselves so that we may help others, we are bringing happiness to these others. Whenever you receive something, a success in business, an opportunity, or help of any kind, immediately consider it a Cosmic obligation to do, in some small way for others, as you have been done by.

Your contribution may be for a needy friend, for animal shelters, for the support of cultural activities; that is for you to choose. Most certainly under the Law of AMRA any donations to the Council of So-

lace, or to the A.M.O.R.C. in general, will be applied in numerous ways for the betterment of our fellow men and the support of the worthy Rosicrucian cause.—X

Brain and Mind

The difference between the brain and the mind has fascinated man from the dawn of consciousness. In our Rosicrucian teachings it is necessary to distinguish between the two terms in order that the particular function of each may be clarified. The following three questions have been directed to *The Rosicrucian Forum* concerning this subject: Does the brain reason? Is brain synonymous with mind? Is the function of the brain the same as that of the objective mind? These three questions probably cover most of the field concerning the relationship of brain and mind that may occur to the average member who is interested in this subject. It is necessary to analyze each question as an individual unit if we are to gain a complete understanding of the different functions of these two attributes of human existence.

The brain does reason, or rather, we might say it is the medium in which reason takes place. Just as the heart is the organ that is at the center of the circulatory system, so the brain is the organ that is at the center of the sensory system. The heart is not the circulatory system; it is not the blood. In fact, the heart has to be fed by the blood just like any other organ in the body. The brain, by the same analysis, is not the thinking part of us. It is the organ, or the center, to which all nerves lead, and, as a result, the sensory activity of the body takes place therein. Every impulse that is received by the body, every sensation that takes place within it, does in some way or another enter the spinal nervous system, and indirectly, the brain. There are certain reflexes that are purely at a spinal level. Nevertheless, the spinal column is closely connected with the brain, and we think of the cerebrospinal system as the center of all nervous energy. Reasoning on an objective level takes place within the brain. The ordinary functions of consciousness in our day-to-day living are within the brain—that is, our memories, our recollections, what we see, feel, hear, taste, and smell—and our

reactions to these functions and to other various conditions of our environment and of our thought take place in our objective consciousness and at the level of the brain.

To a certain extent creative ability is expressed within the brain level; that is, we can relate facts and experiences in objective consciousness. A simple illustration can be found in the field of mathematics. If we see two items in one position and two more items in another position, we are then able to relate those two isolated facts within consciousness and come to the conclusion that there are four such items existing within our field of perception. This is a simple illustration of objective reasoning.

The next of our questions is concerned with the brain's being synonymous with mind. This question can be answered very simply. The brain and the mind are two distinctly different things. A good way to keep this fact in mind is to remember this important observation: In accordance with Rosicrucian philosophy, mind can function without the brain but the brain cannot function without the mind. This proves that the brain and the mind are two absolutely different things, each serving a specific purpose within life. The student of mysticism makes an important distinction between the brain and the mind; that is, he thoroughly realizes that the mind is the most important factor of the two, that the mind is a manifestation or phase of soul or life which functions independently, at some times, from the brain itself.

A very good brief analysis of this function is given in the glossary of the *Rosicrucian Manual* where the term *mind* is defined. It might be well to consider some of the most important points of this definition. First of all, there is pointed out the obvious fact that the brain is a physical organ. As a physical organ it serves for some of the functioning of the mind. It is important that the word *some* appears here. The brain is not the entire functioning of mind. Rather, mind functions through the brain to a great extent but not exclusively does it function through that organ. It is possible for the mind to function when there is no brain. This has actually been proved on a physiological level. The brain has experimentally been removed from animals and certain forms of life persisted in manifesting. Cer-

tain reflexes took place, certain activity of body continued, and even life was maintained for a limited length of time. There are other illustrations in more recent times when brain injuries have not always resulted in immediate death.

The mind, according to the *Rosicrucian Manual* and according to the Rosicrucian teachings, is divided into two phases, the subjective and the objective. We sometimes refer to the objective mind and to the subjective mind as if they were two things. This is not true. They are only functions of the same thing. The mind of man is immortal, an attribute of the soul or personality; whereas, the brain, being a physical organ, is a mortal thing, a physical entity just like any other part of the body. We may therefore say that the brain and mind are not synonymous and we can remember our basic principle that the brain exists only as a physical entity; or, in other words, its continuous existence is concurrent with the existence of the rest of the physical body. Without that physical body, the brain would cease to exist or at least to function, and have no use. Nevertheless, in contrast, the mind is a distinctly different thing. It is one of the attributes of self which continues to manifest as long as there is evidence of being of any kind.

Life exists separately from the physical body, and mind is the function of life of which we can become conscious—for after all, consciousness is an attribute of the mind which *may* take place in the brain. With the brain alone consciousness could not exist, but with mind consciousness becomes apparent. Therefore, consciousness in both of its phases, subjective and objective, is a manifestation of the law of the triangle because consciousness, insofar as we know, functions where both brain and mind exist. Subjective consciousness no doubt, being an attribute of the soul, maintains its existence independent of the simultaneous existence of mind and brain. However, since we are physical entities, thinking of consciousness in terms of our existence, we need the combination of both brain and mind to become aware of our present existence.

The last of our three questions may have already been answered, concerning whether or not the function of the brain is the same as that of the objective mind. We may

qualify our answer by saying that the objective mind is known to us, or we may become aware of it through the medium of the brain. Our objective thinking is at a brain level. We carry on most of our thinking, most of our living, at the level of our objective consciousness. All the five physical senses constantly bombard our nervous system with the impressions which they gather on the outside; that is, everything that enters the body in the form of sensations comes into the central nervous system of which the brain is the primary organ through the five physical senses. Nerve endings connect with our sense organs, such as the eye, the ear, etc., and the other end connects with the spinal nervous system and the brain. As a result, into the brain come the sensations by which we compose our perception of things; and as we interpret these various sensations coming into the brain we put them together, we reason about their relationship to each other, and the total of our reasoning and of our perception is in the content of consciousness or the point of attention within the objective mind at any given time.

We may, therefore, say that the brain is the medium by which objective consciousness or objective mind functions. But we cannot say that the function of the brain and the function of the objective mind are identical because without mind even though the brain appeared to be a perfect organ, there could not be any perception, any sensation, of any kind. It is the life force—that is, the vital life force—that is almost synonymous with the manifestation of soul which pervades our body, makes it a living thing, makes it an entity that is distinguishable from other material things that cause us to be a living being, a thinking being, and therefore a mental being. In this latter qualification, we are referring to an entity exhibiting the various manifestations of mind. Without mind, the brain could not function. With mind, we are objectively conscious of our perceptions and our reflections upon those perceptions.

Therefore, we might in summary say that the brain and the mind are distinctly different things: the brain is a physical organ through which the mind functions part of the time or to a certain extent of its potentialities; the mind, on the other hand, is

an attribute of the life force itself. It is the process by which we continue to be living beings and not merely physical, mechanical entities. Brain and mind are different but are both necessary to the physical life. We cannot live on this earth without either one of them. We must have both. As long as we are physical beings, the mind and brain will both function to a certain degree within the physical structure of our being. We believe, however, that since the brain is *mortal* and the mind, being immaterial, is *immortal* that it has attributes which continue to function beyond the scope of time when the physical body is no longer necessary. Immortality and mind are closely related. How mind functions without a body we cannot know, but we are conscious of the fact that its functioning is not dependent upon any physical thing. It goes above, or transcends, physical limitations, and therefore, in immortality mind will still be an entity. It will be the mind of the soul.—A

The Function of Conscience

Man can make no prouder statement than, "I shall act according to my conscience." Much has been said in the name of conscience, and little has been done to define this attribute or its function. It is well in the field of human psychology and the study of human behavior for us to analyze from time to time the various attributes of conscience and become at least conversant upon its nature and potentialities.

Throughout the history of man, there have been those individuals who have dedicated themselves to upholding the principles of justice, love, truth, and tolerance against any external pressure which might be brought to bear that might make them give up that which they knew and that which they, as individuals, held dear or sacred. Upon occasion, it has been necessary for man to denounce loved ones and country rather than participate in those acts which would uphold corruption and injustice. Many times, man has had to make the choice between what might have been accepted in society as value and the value that lay within himself in so far as his convictions had committed him to certain ideals. Socrates preferred to face death rather than to face life opposed to his

conscience which would have been necessary had he compromised the truth.

On the other hand, history also shows that there have been various men, or individuals, who claim to be motivated by *their* conscience. These individuals in the name of conscience acted in a manner which seems to us today to have been directly opposed to the way that a proper realization of conscience would have directed. For example, such individuals in the period of the Inquisition burned men of conscience at the stake. Men and women who held to their ideals which had been proved to be of value through their conscience were tortured, persecuted, and condemned to death by other men who also, in the name of conscience, carried out ruthless persecution. There is hardly an example in history of an act of cruelty against others or oneself which has not been rationalized as being the dictate of conscience. There is always an enigma in our analysis of that which appears to be diametrically opposed to different forms of behavior although in the name of the same principle. In man's history, we see misinterpretations of conscience—two extreme types of behavior coming from what is labeled, in so far as terminology is concerned, as ethical thinking. Men have given up life while others took life in the name of conscience. Was conscience the same thing in both cases, or was it a name misapplied to a variety of things? Or, to take the cynical viewpoint, is conscience merely a myth and not a true basis of human motivation?

The conclusions we might reach from studying human behavior through history, philosophy, or religion do not quite satisfy the human mind as to the nature of conscience because in none of these subjects can we find one answer to the problem of the many interpretations of this word—nor do we find the application that is most important to our behavior today. So many uses of the term *conscience* show that the meaning is nominal—the existence of so many meanings for the term indicates that it has been loosely applied. Those who have not made a foundation upon which to substantiate or excuse their acts have yet been able to turn to conscience, since no one can deny the validity of another individual's conscience. Conscience exists within the privacy of the individual conscience, and is there-

fore not subject to judgment or analysis except as we analyze the resultant acts.

In an attempt to come to an understanding of this concept, Erich Fromm divided conscience into two phases: authoritarian conscience and humanistic conscience. This division is acceptable in modern philosophy as being a starting point for the consideration of conscience in terms of actual behavior. It is my purpose here to attempt to follow the classification to a certain point, but to modify it with my interpretation of conscience in terms of Rosicrucian philosophy. In order to do this, I will, for want of better terms, refer to my division of the subject as: implanted conscience, self conscience, and intuitive conscience.

IMPLANTED CONSCIENCE

The first of these—which I am calling implanted conscience—is a type of conscience of which the average individual is mostly aware. It is the conscience that has been brought about by environment. Conscience is not something that is built up within us by Divine decree, and that is why different forms of behavior exist in different parts of the world and even in different strata of society. The implanted conscience is the voice of an *internalized external authority*, that is, conscience implanted within us which has come from the outside. It is the voice of parents, of the State, or of a concept of God which has been accepted by an individual or a certain section of society. Implanted conscience is therefore a voice established within consciousness based upon whatever the society of which the individual is a part recognizes as an authority. This type of conscience is not the result of free will or free thinking of the individual. By implanting a sense of responsibility or duty within an individual, the authority accepted by the individual becomes the most important factor in the universe.

As long as human relationship to authority remains external, such recognition of conscience is merely expedient in the presence of outside authority. This recognition of conscience is no more nor less than a concept of the existence of certain authority implanted within the thinking of individuals, and the individual's hope of accomplishing or gaining something is based upon the approval of that authority. The function of such an implanted conscience is therefore

regulated almost entirely by fear of punishment or hope of reward, and the individual regulates his whole life in such a way as to avoid some of the immediate punishments or to gain certain rewards.

Heaven and Hell are therefore the concept of the authority which attempts to regulate human behavior by implanting within the individual human being this concept of fear and hope. Our behavior in life is based upon the concepts implanted in consciousness, and our feeling of guilt, which may accompany any thought or conclusion we reach, is associated with external authority. The individual who is controlled by conscience implanted from without is the victim of the authority forced upon him. He does not base his behavior upon his desire to live fully but rather to avoid those things which he has falsely believed to be in conflict to proper living. Actually those people whose lives are controlled by such a series of concepts misconstrue the feeling of guilt for that of fear—they are actually afraid. Such authorities as parents, the Church, the State, or public opinion are responsible for the false moral ethical codes which are accepted by the individual as legislators of behavior. As such these authorities and their opinions, or any one of them, become the laws and sanctions which one adopts, thus making an internal thing out of what has actually been implanted from the outside.

As the result, an implanted guilty conscience may come from a feeling of strength, independence, and pride; whereas, the implanted good conscience may spring from a feeling of dependence, obedience, defenselessness, and powerlessness. The opposite should be true; we should feel free to express ourselves and be proud of our self-expression. We should not feel good merely because we let ourselves be controlled by an external authority. Man as an individual has a right to develop himself. Implanted conscience robs a human being of his greatest right: that is, to live in the fullest extent; to develop his own individuality. To live entirely as a result of a system of codes and regulations implanted from the outside is to shut off the individual's right and privilege to approach God directly.

SELF CONSCIENCE

Self conscience is quite different. It is not the internalized voice of an authority which

we are eager to please and afraid of displeasing. Self conscience is our own voice. It is potentially present in every human being, and it exists and can manifest independent of external sanctions or rewards. This voice speaks within us even to the extent of contradicting upon occasion the implanted conscience. It is the voice that seems to be able to make known its awareness even in childhood when we begin to analyze the behavior that may have been forced upon us and the behavior of adults which is different from that which we have been taught. This voice of self conscience helps to bring out the best in us. We are conscious of its good purpose. At times we are distinctly aware of this voice and at times we become deaf to it. Usually, it can be heard by being cultivated. We can also become completely deaf to it, or it can cease to exist, when we permit authority from the outside to replace our own thinking and feeling with something that is completely external.

Self conscience is the reaction of our whole self, of our total personality to its proper functioning and disfunctioning. Self conscience is not limited to a single or limited capacity. It is a functioning which relates itself to our whole capacity to live. Self conscience causes us to be able to judge our behavior as human beings. It is the voice of knowledge within oneself. Acts, thoughts, and feelings which we find conducive and which contribute to the proper functioning and unfolding of our whole self, our most cherished aims and desires, produce a feeling within us of inner approval and rightness; that is, the self recognizes the good. On the other hand, those acts, thoughts, and feelings which are injurious to our whole self or the total personality cause us to have a feeling of uneasiness or discomfort, and this is particularly characteristic of the evolved human being. Such uneasiness is truly what we might call a guilty conscience. We are guilty of not recognizing our true self.

Self conscience is thus a reaction of ourselves to ourselves. It is the voice of our true self which causes us to realize the value and potentialities of self and therefore to utilize that life which is ourselves—to live productively, to develop fully and harmoniously, and to become what we potentially are.

Self conscience is therefore a guardian of

our integrity. It is that which produces within man those feelings and those aspirations which raise him above the level that is found in any other form of life or above a level that is produced by someone else through exerting pressure upon the individual. It is true that man cannot regulate existence in terms of his own wishes; that is, he cannot live entirely within himself, and yet self is the one thing of which man is most conscious. It is the one thing which is exclusively the reflection of his individuality and is his responsibility to develop. We can make adjustments for the expression of self, but we do not always have to do this in terms of an authority outside of us. Those activities and feelings that have to do with external conditions can also contribute to growth within. The environment in which we live is related to our inner being like the soil to the seed. We grow in our environment and can enrich self through participation in the development of other selves.

Probably the most profound feeling which we reach out of our selves is that of love which can be defined as the affirmation of the potentialities, the care for, and the respect of the uniqueness of the loved one. Applying this same principle to self, the self conscience can reasonably be called the voice which is within us impelling us to exert loving care of ourselves. This is not an expression of selfishness but a true desire for the self to be cared for and to permit its fullest expression.

INTUITIVE CONSCIENCE

Intuitive conscience is no more nor less than a continued existence of self conscience. Intuitive conscience is self conscience expressing on a higher level or plane. It is an extension of self into a higher dimension. Such an extension can be toward love, that is, in the evaluations of self, it strives to include another person, a deity, or an ideal. Also, this extension of self conscience is an extension within toward the inner self, toward the awakening of the function of intuition. This process assists the growth toward the eventual mystical union with the Divine. This concept of development is the realization that the still small voice, which is self conscience, may evolve into a stronger thing within us which will eventually change from a small voice to one which will shout to us its meaning. The development

of this highest concept of conscience is directly related to the development of intuition. Through intuition, the means is provided by which any human attribute is evolved beyond the mere human level. Intuition therefore lifts man from merely being a human to a state of being that which is Godlike. Intuition provides the knowledge and assurance that will permit certainty to replace doubt, and establishes an authority within us which will not permit room for an authority falsely implanted from without. Through intuitive knowledge, we grow, evolve, and live, exemplifying those ideals that lift consciousness above the material world which constitutes our environment.

Implanted conscience restricts the growth of intuition and prohibits the existence of intuitive conscience. We need to live and grow—not to live and be ruled by an authority or a set of codes established by man. Through intuition, we gain access to the ultimate authority. We can be guided by the voice of intuitive conscience within us through thought, feeling, and action. To restrict ourselves to someone else's code, other than is necessary to live properly in society, is to subdue a force which cries for expression. Self being the only channel to the realization of the Absolute is the channel to the strongest force and greatest power to which we have access. If we do not permit its growth or development, it becomes a force within us that literally will wreck us because life without those intuitive urges is meaningless. We have all seen individuals who have seemingly sealed themselves off from all self-expression. It is abnormal; it is not conducive to proper living. Seal even a small teakettle, heat it, and it can explode and wreck a house; but let those vapors which develop escape, and the kettle sings.

God does not establish a high wall around us. As Emerson said, there are cracks in everything that God has made. We may learn that the expression of self is the means of realizing those cracks, of realizing that perfection in the sight of God is not conformance to an external code, of realizing that perfection is so living that within the depths of our own conscience, we feel at all times accountable to God.—A

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SEEKING ASSURANCE

A cherished role in Fleeting Time,
My script I scan, each word and line.
I find it takes a lot of care
To learn to act what's written there.

Some times I play another's role—
I lend that time, and share my soul.
A finger on my place I hold,
More pages there I must unfold—
Such force I feel from line to line.
I like this part in Fleeting Time.

—Soror Connie Fox

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FOR MEMBERS ONLY

Greetings!



FALSE COUNSELORS

Dear Fratres and Sorores:

There is an old adage to the effect that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." Unfortunately, many persons do not realize that they know only "a little about a great deal." The knowledge they possess of some subjects may far exceed that had by the average person; however, their knowledge may not be comprehensive enough to be authoritative—and therein lies the danger. The importance of knowledge is to be aware of its limitations, as well. Thus, what we know we may relate only for its value, its particular contribution to the subject it embraces. When one thinks and believes himself omniscient, he then excludes all new and additional knowledge. He becomes dogmatic. He speaks with an air of finality, of conclusiveness, that tends to bar any further enlightenment upon the topic.

There are two factors which contribute to the confidence of an individual. The first is *positive* and the more important. It arises out of actual experience. It is positive because it constitutes activity on the part of the individual. What he experienced has become to him an intimate and personal knowledge. He has gained ideas from impressions made upon him and his own reactions to them. By such an experience, he is fortified. He knows of its elements, of what it is composed, and of his own response in turn. He is thus prepared in a manner for a similar encounter. This preparation through experience, instills *confidence*. The extent of the assurance depends upon the effect of the experience upon the individual.

The other factor creating confidence is *negative*. It is the lack of any experience which will challenge one's notions and opinions. Many men are self-assured, having a strong sense of security in their opinions only because they have never been put to test; the knowledge associated with such confidence is mostly abstract or hearsay. We must encourage original thought. We must also encourage deduction from general ideas. Such knowledge, however, has no pragmatic value until it is reduced to appli-

cation, put to test in our daily living. Certainly, the confidence that such engenders (if not false) may at least be groundless.

The man with little knowledge upon a subject but who yet exhibits confidence in his own authority is obviously one whose experience is limited. The wise man is the one who has put his knowledge to a test, for wisdom is the technique of applying what one knows. The wise man admits of the probability of error. He relates that although what he knows is factual, it is at least limited to the time and circumstances by which he learned it. He will not attempt to impart his knowledge to another without admonishing him that there are unknown factors which must also be anticipated. The man whose knowledge is born and tempered by experience is rarely boastful. He is too fully aware that it is difficult to be prophetic because there are too many extenuating circumstances which might arise to counter the conclusions which he has drawn from his limited fount of wisdom.

The one who knows that he does not know, is most ready to learn. He does not need to purge himself of false notions nor does he cling to any to spare his pride. Nevertheless, such persons are often misled by the loud, the vain and positive assertions of those who profess to know. Their own admitted lack of knowledge makes them humble in the presence of the pretenders. They wrongly presume that no one would speak so authoritatively upon a subject and freely give counsel unless he were prepared to do so. Thus, they quietly listen and are fascinated by the loosely spoken phrases offered as fact and as being indisputable truths. They take counsel from one, the basis of whose oratory is nothing but boldness and ignorance of his own self-ignorance.

These false counselors have at times been repudiated in their statements by truly learned persons, organizations or institutions. Their false pride is thus injured. Finally realizing their inadequate knowledge, they retire from association with those who might

correct them. Not wishing to be humble in the presence of the truly learned, they seek a group of people who know less than they—so that among them they may feel superior. There they establish themselves as a kind of preceptor and oracle. They never relate that what they expound to their listeners has been proved erroneous by others. To justify their stand, to give it emphasis, they attack the findings and truth of their superiors. They make the good seem to be the worst. They poison the minds of their unfortunate listeners by first imparting a false knowledge and, second, by ridiculing the truth.

These persons will not be found in places of learning, for they are afraid of exposure. They will establish themselves where neophytes may be found—people newly searching for knowledge and yet not able to determine the difference between the true and the false. Then, as if expounding some secret gnosis not to be found in the conventional and reputable places of learning, they spew out their froth of untruth. Again, you will find such false prophets with a knot of listeners about them at the corner drugstore, at the cocktail bar, or at the local tavern. You will also find them in various places, searching out confused beginners, members of some organization or the dissenters of some group, and rallying them by a braggadocian display of leadership.

Listen well when you hear an individual speaking loudly, reiterating again and again, as if to challenge doubt that his words are true. Before accepting his counsel, ask frankly what is his background, academic training and experience, permitting him to speak so authoritatively. If you are timid about approaching him in this manner, then inquire indirectly further before placing reliance upon mere words. Remember that one can only accept something as being real or true when it cannot be repudiated by anyone. That which appears logical may not be so in fact. Therefore, go to a public library and apply for an authoritative reference source by which to check the accuracy of the statements that have been made to you. You may also consult a well-known organization, or an institution the activities of which are directly related to the subject, and thus learn whether the speaker's statements were true.

What price truth! Are you willing to embrace untruth and inaccuracies because they are offered freely from an unknown or self-acclaimed authority? Learning requires sacrifice and often expense. The teacher, whether an individual or an organization, is worthy of his hire. It is better to support an authoritative channel or organization than to accept loose talk gratis. Beware, as well, of the one who inveighs against real study and mental effort in the acquisition of knowledge and offers instead the *easy*, the *quick* method. There are no short cuts to real learning. One must by his own efforts raise his consciousness, develop his understanding, to be in accord with what he seeks. Learning requires the focus of attention. With it goes the slight aggravation that comes from the effort to memorize, from abstraction, and the exertion of reason. The labor of study is pleasant when one properly prepares himself, for each hour brings its reward—a deep sense of satisfaction. The one who tells you that these things are not necessary, and offers to counsel you without self-effort, is but leading you astray. He is appealing only to your sense of pleasure and imagination. He lulls into lethargy your reason, your judgment, your natural mental powers by which you really grow.

Real knowledge must be intimate at all times. What is imparted to you by another can be at best but a stimulant to arouse your own thoughts which must embrace it. A *predigested knowledge* extended by another can raise you no higher than the one upon whom you depend for it.

Faternally,

RALPH M. LEWIS

Imperator.

Is Meat Eating Harmful?

A frater from Brazil and a soror from the southern part of the United States come before our Forum at this time with questions of a more or less related nature.

The frater states: "In the Confession to Maat, which is of traditional origin and is brought to the attention of all members, I read the line: 'I have caused no pain to be inflicted upon man or animal.' Is this not a little inconsistent with some of the monograph material which indicates that there

is no superiority in the vegetarian diet alone, and which would imply that we *should* eat meat; obviously, by eating meat we are inflicting pain upon animals."

Then the soror says: "In a recent monograph I received, it states: 'Man has not yet eliminated those teeth used for masticating flesh or meat, indicating that man is prepared by nature to eat and to digest flesh, etc.' I am not a vegetarian nor a fanatic on this subject, as I serve meat to my family every day, but whenever the question comes up there is always a doubt in my mind concerning this. Has not man developed his teeth *as a result* of his own practices and customs? Many organs have atrophied through nonuse, and some have merely changed, but I thought man's habits and customs caused nature to alter him accordingly. The point I am trying to make is this: that nature gave man the teeth only because he wanted meat and needed the teeth for the meat. If he did not desire the meat, over an equal period of time, then man would perhaps not need the same type of teeth."

The subject of eating meat and its relationship to spiritual idealism, and to man's spiritual evolvement, is a rather controversial one. The Rosicrucian Order definitely does not advocate vegetarianism. The fact that we do not advocate it does not mean that we do advocate meat eating. We believe that the eating of meat is a personal choice, the decision of the individual.

First, we would like to make this clear: one cannot eat himself into spirituality. It is true that a well-balanced diet and the partaking of certain foods into our system, brings into our bodies certain invisible elements which we might call *spiritual qualities*. But these things are necessary only in bringing about the harmony of our body. When we are healthy, normal beings, we have the greater opportunity to unfold spiritually. In other words, our thoughts and consciousness when we are healthy can be directed toward ends other than relief from pain, sickness, or disease.

There is no food that in itself, if it does not disturb the balance of our health, will either contribute or detract from man's purely spiritual element. The Universal consciousness, which enters our beings with the Vital Life Force, is the essence of what we

call our *personal soul*, and that is in no way affected by our food. Even ill-health does not actually affect the spiritual essence of our being; it only interferes with our harmony with the spiritual essence. The real question which constitutes a conflict in many minds is whether a human being who is trying to raise himself above the primitive stage of his animal nature, and trying to express the higher consciousness, should try as much as is within his power to live without sacrificing animal life for food.

The survival instinct is exceedingly strong. Each expression of life will use every means at its disposal to live even if it means the sacrifice of other kinds of life. There is no evidence that vegetarians who will not take life to eat flesh have never been guilty of murder or have never killed in self-defense to preserve themselves. Thus, the whole matter is debatable. If the individual has a compunction about eating meat because it results in the slaughter of animals, and if he can find sufficient proteins in other sources of food to keep himself healthy, then we would encourage him to be a vegetarian. There is a brutality about the destruction of animal life for any reason. This the sensitive individual cannot help realizing and being affected by. It is safe to say that if the average individual who eats meat also had to kill the animals, to slaughter and butcher them, he would not be a meat eater! If the average person who buys meat, thinking of it almost in terms of something inanimate, were to pay a visit to a slaughterhouse and see the terror that comes into the eyes of many of those animals and could hear their bellows and screams as they seem to realize their fate, he would hesitate before he ate meat again.

However, to be logical about the whole matter, if you have such a sensitive nature that meat eating is repugnant, you must at least be consistent about it. In a way it is amusing and rather pathetic to find staunch vegetarians, exhorting their fellows not to indulge in such savagery as meat eating, who wear leather shoes which, of course, come from the hides of animals; some of these individuals even wear furs. We should try within our power, to be consistent with our *idealism*, or otherwise we become hypocritical or make a mockery of that which we want to hold sacred.

Insofar as nature is concerned, it is not affected by the destruction of life. Life is bountiful to nature. Life, to nature, is just one phase of a cycle; death is the other acceptable phase. Man stresses the importance of life because of his fear of death. Nature has no such fear: life and death are equal aspects of a single cycle. Furthermore, it must be realized that in our very living, we destroy organisms. In the exhalation of our breath, the carbon dioxide destroys organisms immediately about us. The question is where to draw the line in not destroying life.

I think that most of us mean that we are reluctant to destroy life wherein consciousness has reached the stage of realization of pain and the individual living thing has attained, sufficient awareness to realize its own danger; it thus, in a sense, experiences emotional and mental torment as well as physical torture. In most religions, with the possible exception of the Hindu, who are extremists, "Thou shalt not kill!" refers only to human life and to the imposing of unnecessary suffering upon animals. For the time being, we can only hope that, in the case of individuals who feel that meat eating is essential, the slaughter of animals be done as humanely as possible.

In closing, I again wish to state that, aside from the idealism involved, the consumption of meat neither adds to nor detracts from the purely spiritual part of our being.—X

Knowledge is not Enough

We might ask ourselves the question, "Has knowledge value in itself?" This question may seem odd to a person who has not previously analyzed the idea. The obvious conclusion would be that knowledge constitutes value. After all, the world thrives on knowledge. Much of that which we enjoy today is the result of the accumulation of knowledge by man. But when we take time to analyze this same principle or question from another point of view, we cannot help understanding and realizing that all the accumulated knowledge of the ages to which man now has access has not been the answer to some of the perennial problems that face him in society and in his personal life. These problems have to do with the most basic

principles of living—the problems of man's becoming adjusted to his environment and thereby living in at least a degree of contentment.

All the knowledge that man has attained, stored in his libraries and made available in his museums, and which today is accessible to almost any individual, particularly in the democracies, has not saved man; that is, it has not saved him from threats of war, the possibility of suffering, of illness, and want. All the things against which man has fought, which he has striven to do away with, are still ever before us. There exists at the present time in the world the possibility of the most devastating war that has ever taken place in the history of mankind; and yet, we have sufficient knowledge to avoid such a catastrophe. We know that in the end war is not justifiable. We know that neither the victor nor the vanquished gains particularly from the outcome of war. Within the lives of most of us, great wars have taken place, nevertheless. We further know that there are other things, for example, forms of disease which man has not yet conquered. There is suffering that results from both physical and mental illness; there is hunger; there exist economic problems with their possibility of bringing about depression and want.

All these things exist in spite of knowledge. Some of us might become cynical and ask, "Why then does man accumulate knowledge—what good is it if it will not make for him a better life or at least better conditions in which to live his life?" The answer is that knowledge itself is not lacking; the trouble lies in our application of that knowledge. It is the experience in utilizing the knowledge and putting it into effect that is of most importance. All the knowledge in the world would not benefit anyone unless it could be utilized. To read through an encyclopedia or to memorize a dictionary has little value when an individual is faced with a problem that needs immediate and practical solution. That is why there are many people who live more contentedly and who possibly have attained a better degree of happiness without having the knowledge that might be considered necessary in the academic sense of the word. These individuals have learned how to utilize the few things that they may have

learned. They have gained in experience that which makes it possible for them to adjust themselves better to the circumstances in which they live.

From time to time a letter comes from some individual inquiring about the Rosicrucian Order, or even from a comparatively new member wanting to know why the Rosicrucian teachings are published in the form of private discourses issued only to its members. The overanxious individual wants to know if he can have all the materials in book form, wants to know if it is possible that the contents of all the monographs might be published in a set of books which he can study. It is of course possible that they could be. The monographs, instead of being put in individual form, could be put in one set of books, and it is conceivable that an individual might be able to read this set of books in a matter of hours if he devoted himself to it. But when he finished that work, after he had read the books, what would be the advantage? He would have, it is quite true, certain knowledge that he may not have had before, but that would not be enough. Mere possession of knowledge does not bring about a degree of happiness, contentment, nor does it necessarily greatly contribute to the spiritual evolution of the individual.

The Rosicrucian teachings are presented in the form that they now exist for the simple reason that they can be presented as principles and applied as such. The simple exercises, experiments, and rituals that accompany the Rosicrucian teachings are the means by which this knowledge becomes a part of the life of the individual, the means by which it is absorbed into consciousness and becomes a living factor. The rituals make it possible for man to associate both fact and emotion, and to relate his rational process to his process of feeling. These conditions within the consciousness of man make it possible for him to grow, to evolve spiritually, mentally, and physically; and it is the evolution, it is the application, it is the experience of the knowledge taught, that is the true value of anything we learn. This is the basis of the Rosicrucian presentation of their philosophy and without this application the individual does not gain that which he seeks. We are not merely seekers of knowledge, although the Rosicru-

cians have always been a ray of light in the midst of superstition; as individuals we also wish to make that knowledge effective in our lives to better ourselves and, we hope, to better the environment of which we are a part.—A

How to Join an AMORC Lodge or Chapter

A question received in some recent correspondence, directed to one of the officers of the Order, indicated that the individual did not realize the procedure or method by which a member can affiliate with a subordinate Lodge or Chapter. A number of times, within the pages of *The Rosicrucian Forum* and of other literature, the advantages of a Lodge or a Chapter have been outlined. Throughout this jurisdiction of the Order, there are in existence many Lodges and Chapters. It might be well for us to review very briefly the constitutional requirements for these groups and just how they function.

In almost every major city of the world today there are representatives of the Rosicrucian Order. These groups, some of them Chapters, some of them Lodges, are members just like you and I; they have decided to work together in an organization of a local nature, for the group, for themselves, and for the benefit of each other. Forty members of the Order who wish to do so may, upon receiving dispensation from the Supreme Grand Lodge, establish a Chapter. The procedure by which a Chapter is established has been worked out in detail and complete information concerning this procedure can be obtained by writing to the Supreme Secretary.

The minimum requirement is a necessity because fewer than forty members would be hardly enough to fill the positions as officers and to have functioning groups such as various committees, as well as individuals, for projects that become a part of Lodge or Chapter activities. Individuals who affiliate with a Chapter are those who enjoy the association with other individuals who have similar interests. The Chapter does not take the place of the privileges of sanctum membership. All members of a Chapter or a Lodge receive their monographs in the same way; that is, the monographs come by mail

and the individual study periods of the sanctum member are maintained. The work of Lodges or Chapters is supplementary. It consists of rituals, discourses, social gatherings, and activities by which the work of the Order can be made known to other people; and also certain practical demonstrations of the Rosicrucian principles can be carried out by a group of individuals.

A Chapter or a Lodge is a function that is entirely voluntary on the part of the members who affiliate with it. There is no compulsion to affiliate with a Lodge or a Chapter; consequently, Lodges and Chapters are voluntary groups, individuals who find satisfaction and benefit in associating themselves for the purpose of expressing, and to be representative of, the ideals for which the organization stands.

Do you wish to affiliate with a Lodge or a Chapter? If you do, you should consult the directory in the back of the *Rosicrucian Digest*. This directory changes in every other issue; therefore, be certain to check the issue in which Lodges and Chapters are listed for the country in which you live. If you find a Lodge or a Chapter listed in the city in which you live, or in a near-by city, you may write to the secretary of the Chapter whose address is listed in this directory and ask for an application blank upon which to apply for membership in that Lodge or Chapter. You will receive full instructions and a necessary form to use for this purpose.

Every sanctum member has the privilege to join a Chapter or a Lodge if he so desires. If you do not find a Chapter or a Lodge listed near you, write to the Supreme Secretary to determine definitely where the nearest Lodge or Chapter is located; or, if one is not near enough to be convenient for you to affiliate with, ask whether there are sufficient members in your immediate vicinity to establish a Chapter. If you live in a small place, it would be well to give the names of a number of towns or cities within a reasonable area to see if a sufficient number of members exists in the group to which you refer so that a Chapter might be established in one central place.

A Lodge or a Chapter is as effective and as worth while as the members who compose it make or desire it to be. In Lodges and Chapters where members work for the good of the Order, for the advancement of

themselves, and for the growth of the Rosicrucian principles in civilization today, a great deal of satisfaction and pleasure is found in the association provided by a Rosicrucian group.—A

The Element of Faith

It is a premise of the Rosicrucian teachings that faith occupies a secondary position to that of knowledge and experience. We are taught in some of the earliest degrees that faith is not as important as knowledge. In other words, blind faith can be deceiving. A person can have faith in a thing that has no actual existence—no validity. Therefore, it is important for the student, wishing to develop a philosophy of his own, to realize that something besides faith must become a part of the foundation upon which to build such a philosophy. On the other hand, we cannot lose sight of the fact that there is a certain value in faith; we have to have faith even to begin a study such as the Rosicrucian teachings, even if that faith is no more than faith in ourselves or faith in our individual ability to be able to grasp the technique and the principles which will be presented.

Usually, when faith is referred to, it is thought of in terms of the condition that is closely related to certain religious doctrines wherein faith becomes the exclusive basis of belief, and all belief is based upon faith. Anyone who has had the experience of living in a home under the influence of an orthodox religion realizes that there are many things, many questions and principles that are not discussed. Analytical study is practically banned in some forms of religious belief. This brings about a concept that religion or things that have to do with God, with life, with the higher principles of being, are something that cannot be discussed from the standpoint of reason, cannot be analyzed, but must be accepted because someone else has said that they are to be accepted.

It is upon the basis of such concepts that the priesthood becomes established in religion, that individuals are set up as intermediaries between man and God to interpret for the individual human being the concepts that are to be his beliefs and upon which he is to base his behavior and in the final con-

sideration do all of this solely on faith. Such a concept naturally has a tendency to stop inquiry. It has a tendency to make thinking, upon the part of the individual human being, subordinate to mere blind acceptance of anything that a religious leader or a religious principle attempts to force upon that individual.

This does not mean that faith has no value. Faith, as outlined in the definition contained in the *Rosicrucian Manual*, provides a certain element that is necessary on the part of an intelligent individual in order to familiarize him with the knowledge and experience that can come later. In the glossary of the *Rosicrucian Manual*, it is stated that faith is an expression of confidence. This means that if we have confidence in ourselves and in something of which we have made a study, or at least a preliminary investigation, we can have the assurance that by giving proper attention to the subject, or to the set of principles to be presented, we will be in a better position to accept and apply what we learn.

Confidence, however, does not mean blind faith. It does mean that we accept a thing because we are told to accept it, or because we believe that there is a personal God that forces us to accept it on the basis that if we do not we will be subject to punishment. Confidence is an assurance. It prepares the point of view; it assists us into the right frame of mind so that we can be mentally alert to those things that can aid us. It would be difficult to approach a course of study, such as the Rosicrucian teachings for example, without a confidence built within ourselves that causes us to believe that here is something worth while, and that we can gain benefit by the practical application of the principles that we are going to study.

The difference between confidence and faith is that confidence is amenable to reason and experience. If we place our confidence in something and later find that it has been misplaced, we are at liberty to make a change; in other words, confidence does not commit us. Confidence is always subject to later findings, or new knowledge and experience, whereas faith is the pure blind acceptance of any set of facts or any group of principles or any mode of procedure with the idea that, come what may, there will be no modification, but always

merely the continued acceptance of that which faith has decreed.

Blind faith, therefore, is the shutting out of reason. A true faith is, as we have already stated, an expression of confidence. Confidence is born of experience—experience comes from the utilization of knowledge. We can realize that a certain degree of confidence, based upon the experience that has been ours, will help us to set up the necessary ideas which can be utilized in creating the knowledge which we hope to attain. Faith helps in the establishment of confidence. It is a means by which we can bridge the gap between the unknown and the known. It is impossible to attain knowledge instantaneously in all the fields that might interest us, but confidence will help us pass over that period until knowledge will enter into our mind and assure us of that which we want to know.

The proper use of faith then is the utilization of those things which will assist in the acquisition of knowledge and experience. It can serve as a steppingstone by which knowledge and self-assurance can be the final achievement or accomplishment. Faith is nothing in itself, it is only a means to an end. It helps us attain that which will bring assurance. Blind faith acts like a narcotic while it is tied up with our emotional system and a part of our thinking. It can take the place of that which we do not know or that which we hope to know.

Knowledge and experience, on the other hand, are entirely different. They are the assurance that comes within our own consciousness through having the actual knowing of a thing take place within our realization. The experience is the utilization of knowledge and its practical application in our living. A familiar quotation with which almost everyone is acquainted is found in the New Testament wherein it is stated that, "Faith is assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Until we attain those things for which we hope, until we can see the field that is now unknown, faith serves as the intermediary. It assures us of what we hope to attain, and it causes us to be able to create a conviction within our being of those things which we cannot now see. But we must not forget that faith alone cannot forever serve in this position. Faith must be replaced with the

realization of things hoped for after there is no longer a necessity for the assurance, and convictions must be replaced by the knowledge and experience of those things seen and realized when they are no longer beyond our sight.—A

Do We Deceive Ourselves?

A frater now comes before our Forum and says: "If one cannot rely on the five senses, they being deceptive, how can one believe what he sees or feels in the experiments? In other words, did I imagine the candle to dim or was it a faulty candle? Did I imagine, after gazing in the mirror for five minutes with only a candle for light, that my reflection was becoming misshapen or inconstant? I checked my mirror after the Initiation and found no distortion in its surface.

"Am I going about our teachings and experiments in too logical a fashion? Should I accept these teachings in blind faith or should I wait until they prove themselves through physical manifestations? I have tried to be utterly frank in asking these questions."

From the philosophical viewpoint, no reality is actually as we perceive it. One of the oldest of all philosophical problems is the question of the accuracy of knowledge arising out of empirical or objective experience. Which is *real*, the idea we have of an experience or the impulses from the external world which act upon our senses? Color, for example, has no counterpart in the outer world, such as red, green, or blue. These colors are but varying wavelengths of the visible spectrum of light which causes us to have, through the medium of sight, *sensations* which we come to identify as red, green, and so forth. Each of our receptor senses has its particular qualities as taste, smell, form, extension, and color. Whatever acts upon our sense organs must produce these qualities singly or in combination.

Our knowledge, then, is a synthesis of our sense qualities and of the vibrations of reality which act upon our sense organs. We can never know objectively what the external world or reality actually is, because we have no immediate knowledge of

it. All we experience are the sensations we have of existence.

The sense organs can be so deceived as to cause interpretations by the mind that are different from normal. What we refer to as *normal* is what the average sense organ and its faculties—as, for example, the faculty of sight—would perceive under specific conditions. Even that norm, as we have said, is not absolute truth. It is only a kind of interpretation of it. However, since we are limited to such categories of interpretation, for all practical purposes we must accept this preponderance of evidence of our senses as the real. We are obliged to govern our lives by them.

The illusions of the senses refer to those instances which, by change of our position in time or in place or by the confirmation of other senses, prove an experience to be other from what we realize it to be. Illusions are those things which, to our own satisfaction, we demonstrate to have no stability; that is, we alter their reality to us. Since we cannot know absolute reality, we must be guided by that which at least appears to be indubitable. The grass is not actually green but, since it appears so to all persons having normal vision, we accept the *implied* reality of its color.

There are many experiments conducted in our Rosicrucian teachings which produce *psychic changes* rather than physical ones. Sometimes we seem, because of suggestion, to objectively perceive something—that is, to see or hear a physical transformation which has not come about. Actually the transformation is one limited wholly to a state of consciousness. The importance of such experiments is to bring about the change in consciousness and not in any thing or any medium which may be used in conjunction with the experiment. There are, however, experiments which the members conduct, the results of which consist partly of changes in consciousness and partly in material reality. To be more pointed, let us refer to the mystical experience, in one of our initiations, of witnessing the *self* in the mirror. Thousands of members have conducted this initiation, not in blind faith but rather with the reserve of skepticism at first, and had what to them were amazing results which they have reported. These persons were not subject to autosuggestion.

They were not reacting to a strong influence of their own imagination. They saw facial changes, contractions of the facial muscles, that actually and considerably altered their features. These changes were not facial contortions, the result of an emotional impact engendered by their own imagination. We have even known of others, not members, who have noticed this different facial appearance, that is, the change of features, of a Rosicrucian member of their family immediately following the conducting of such an initiation ritual. Consequently, these experiences must be distinguished from any state of mind just induced by the efficacy of the ritual instructions.

We do not deny that, to a considerable extent, the initiation experience is a *subconscious* one. The feelings one has accompanying the experience, the impressions of a personality associated with the facial change, all of these are within the realms of the consciousness lying *behind* the objective mind. They are so intimate, so personal, that they are not objectively demonstrable to one not participating in the ceremony. If such immanent experiences alone prevailed, it could then be said that perhaps they were entirely a phenomenon of the subconscious and the illusionary. However, when the elements of the initiation also have an objective counterpart, then certainly there is no self-deception on the part of the candidate or member.

This same criterion may be applied to the exercise concerning the concentration on the candle flame for the purpose of dimming it or causing it to bend slightly either to the right or the left at the will of the individual. There are many scientists who are members of the Rosicrucian Order. They are teachers and researchers in the fields of physics, chemistry, metallurgy, medicine, psychology, and related subjects. These persons are quite conversant with all the *natural phenomena*, the physical causes, which might result in a candle flame's dimming or bending one way or the other. We, too, know and can easily demonstrate in our laboratories how thermal waves and the reduction of oxygen within the room, may cause a similar phenomenon, or a dimming of the candle flame. Consequently, when we state in our monographs that the results are not the cause of any of these things, we are not

resorting to self-deception. To be the victims of self-deception, these members who are scientists would need to be ignorant of common natural laws which would be ridiculous in the light of their training and preparation.

Where the phenomenon obeys the direction of human will or intelligence, it is a corollary that the will and mind are affecting the physical forces upon which they are brought to bear. A relatively new subordinate field of psychology, known as *parapsychology*, is devoted to the empirical investigation of that phenomenon once adjudged by science as "occult bosh" or "rank superstition." That the mind may radiate or emit radiations which can affect material substances is a source of serious investigation by scientists. It is admitted by them that instruments have not been devised which can completely or convincingly demonstrate this power of mind over matter. On the other hand, scientific statistical analysis has revealed a ratio of success in experiments related to this phenomenon which cannot be conscientiously disregarded.

The greatest danger in conducting experiments of this type is the tendency of the individual to exaggerate his results. The enthusiasm that occurs when the experimenter realizes that he has discovered little used, or unused potentialities, is tremendous. In trying to convince others, he may elaborate beyond what he has actually realized. Then, too, the student and member must be sufficiently self-analytical as to be able to distinguish between that aspect of his experience which is of his own subconscious mind and that effect which is actually objective. If this is not done, he may transfer to the mirror, for example, what he has merely perceived on the screen of his own consciousness and then he may imagine the former to be an objective reality.

Such analysis, however, must not be indulged in during the process of the exercise or no success will be had with it. The individual by such reasoning at that time would be limiting his consciousness to the wholly objective state. The necessary evaluation of the experience should be made immediately at the close of the exercise or experiment.

The worst offender is the one who will not even believe what he perceives, thereby denying himself a *new knowledge*. He is not

unlike the backwoodsman who on visiting a zoological garden in a large city and seeing a giraffe, for the first time, refused to believe that there was any such animal.—X

What Does the Rosicrucian Seek?

It is interesting to analyze what the individual is seeking when he or she affiliates with the Rosicrucian Order. If we would make an analysis of every application that is submitted for membership, we could gain a cross section of the thinking, attitude, and concept of the individuals who apply for membership. Bearing in mind that all those who join are not going to continue the studies for a sufficient period of time to advance to the highest degrees of the Order, we also realize that we are obtaining a good cross-section of contemporary thought, by that I mean the thinking of the so-called average individual. These individuals are obviously those who feel motivated to learn something besides what they have been able to gain in whatever academic training they have had and in the experience of the daily life where they happen to be at the present time. We might also say that these individuals are not typical examples of the average man; they are examples of individuals who are somewhat above the average in that they at least are consciously putting into an expression what someone else may only hope. This is an important point and might bear some elaboration.

Every individual daydreams to a certain extent. He wishes that he might have a lot of money, a lot of property, or he wants health, or happiness. In his daydreaming, he imagines these things as having actually taken place. This is simple hope without any attempt to make the things for which he or she hopes come into existence. Although we all daydream, the important thing is that some people do more than daydream. They attempt to put these dreams into actuality. They attempt to bring them into existence in their lives.

Those who submit applications for membership in the Rosicrucian Order are in this latter classification. They have decided to do something about their hopes and aspirations. They feel that possibly through study and application and through learning to

utilize all the forces at their command, that are resident within the human mind and body, they will be able to bring some of these hopes into actual existence. It does not mean that all individuals submitting applications for membership in this organization are going to be able immediately to change their whole lives and environments, but they will be able to direct their efforts and consciousness towards a hope of attaining a degree of peace of mind which after all, coupled with happiness, is probably the greatest possession possible for the human being to attain.

When the average individual becomes associated with the Rosicrucian teachings, he therefore has already asked himself either pointedly or unconsciously, "Why am I here?" and "What am I?" Most of the questions that occur in human experience begin with what, why, when or where. The child begins asking these questions as soon as he gains a sufficient vocabulary to make sentences. We are a curious race in the sense that curiosity is an expression that all of us evidence in some degree. We never see a thing without having some impulse to want to know how it works, how it got there, why it is here, and what utilization is made of it. The individual is born into a complex world, and as soon as he becomes conscious of what is going on about him, he asks the question: "Why am I here?" He wants to know what it is that has brought about this manifestation of life and this existence of a conscious state in an environment which is sometimes perplexing and at times very pleasant.

There have been attempts, to answer this question, throughout the time that man has been a rational being. Often this question and its answers are dropped by many thinking people from their thinking; that is, they decide that life's circumstances are too complex to be answered or that there is no answer. The agnostic claims that we may be here just as an accidental quirk of fate or quirk of nature. The religionist answers the question in varying ways but usually that we are here as a result of *the will of a being* greater, larger, and more complex than ourselves. In other words, with many modifications, fundamentally, religion says that we are here because God put us here, and what are we going to do about it? There are variations of explanations as to what

we should do about it, but basically that is the answer to the question from the standpoint of religion. From the standpoint of philosophy, there are as many explanations as there have been philosophers who have thought upon the subject. There is the extreme mechanistic point of view that man is a mechanical peculiarity that has evolved into the present physical state here on this earth, and there is the other extreme—that of the idealist. Such one has very little to add to the viewpoint of religion, that man exists by an act or will of an external force.

The question "What am I?" is also discussed and analyzed in the fields of religion and philosophy. Basically, religion says that man is body and soul, and philosophy has various interpretations. What we are most interested in is how mysticism, as interpreted by the Rosicrucian philosophy, attempts to answer these questions. How completely or how successfully we may have answered these questions to ourselves may be the key to the philosophy of life that we have been able to develop. The individual who can answer these questions, to his own satisfaction, has taken the most important steps to the establishment of that state of peace of mind and happiness for which we all seek. It little matters whether I answer those questions to your satisfaction or whether you answer them to my satisfaction. What is important is that I arrive at an answer to those questions to my own satisfaction, and that you also arrive at an answer to the same questions that fit you and satisfy you within your own consciousness. You need not attempt to explain why I am here, or what I am. What you are concerned with is your own experience, your own life, your own existence.

The concepts of reincarnation and Karma, in the Rosicrucian teachings, give the most logical basis upon which these questions can be answered. If we are to conceive of the physical life span which varies from a very short span of a few minutes to that of eighty, ninety, or one hundred years in the comparatively extreme cases, we know that even the longest span of human life here on earth, when measured in terms of infinity, is as nothing. One lifetime is just a moment in time or a tick of the clock of eternity. It therefore seems unreasonable from the standpoint of all that will adjust itself to

reason, all that is consistent with what we believe to be good and purposeful, that one human life should be a complete entity of expression within itself.

The concept of reincarnation states that man is more than a mere physical entity placed in a physical environment for a limited length of time. It declares that man is soul. In other words, Rosicrucian mysticism answers the second question as to "What am I?" by saying, "I am soul." Soul is an expression of a life force, an expression of an individuality which has been destined by God to function as a phase of His own manifestation and, at the same time, have an individualized manifestation of a force that is all-pervading and a part of the highest force in the universe. This soul goes through certain functions and processes. Exactly why this whole evolutionary chain of events should take place over a period of eons of time is difficult for the finite mind to conceive, but the fact that it does, or the fact that we accept the conclusion that it does, causes us to realize that life is a continuous expression regardless of what may be the accidental physical things with which we are put in contact from time to time.

We are here then to evolve and to grow. We are going to learn certain things from each physical expression that is ours. In this life, we have certain things to learn. If we direct our attention, our consciousness, and our effort toward trying to learn and understand these things, this particular incarnation will contribute to the whole of our development and will be the basis of a part of our character which can be continued into future incarnations. We will gradually evolve to the point where we will become able to realize the whole content of soul and its whole experience, and therefore be able to complete the Cosmic plan for which we were created.—A

Helping Overcome Karma

A soror of England rising before our Forum says: "Now with regard to Karma, should we show another the way to overcome our karmic debt? There are some people whom one can see positively banging their heads against their *fate* (as they call it). Everything seems to go wrong, not

now and again, but seemingly always. Would a word of suggestion to them, if they are willing to accept it, be appropriate?"

There are those who think that because all our fortune and misfortune is caused either by ourselves or humanity collectively, that any attempt by another to mitigate the effects constitutes an intervention with Cosmic law. If this were so, then it would be Cosmically wrong to display a charitable nature or to show any compassion or mercy for our fellows. It is admitted that karmic law in the Cosmic scheme of things is the law of causality or balance: for every cause there is an effect. But this law is *impersonal* in its operation. There is no intention to inflict punishment or, in the positive application of the law, to reward an individual. For analogy, it is the same as one who by his acts invokes the law of gravity by throwing a stone into the air. What follows is not the consequence of any purpose, but is the function of natural forces. If a person were to catch the stone thrown into the air before it crashes downward into a glass window, he is not defying natural law, and therefore bringing upon himself some penalty. Rather, he is merely imposing a new force to counter the other. So, too, is it with Cosmic law.

If he is reflective, an individual may come to realize that his adversity follows from the course of his own errors or those of society of which he is a part. By intelligence and the application of his own will, he may alter his behavior or thinking so as to lessen the effect of the established causes. In this way, he has *learned his lesson*. The mystical principle behind karma has then been fulfilled. One who is successful in life, that is, has satisfactorily culminated various enterprises and who has had personal happiness, is one who has discovered those causes which account for desired and undesired results, and has acted accordingly.

It behooves the person with foresight, or who through experience has come to learn of physical, moral, and social laws having great influence on our lives, to enlighten others concerning these laws. When you see a person about to make a serious mistake that could be avoided through a word of counsel, it is morally incumbent upon you to tender your advice. Not only should

this be done where the consequence of the effect may be harmful, but also where it may be beneficial. Thus, if someone is not cognizant of an opportunity which lies before him as karmic law, then it should be explained to him.

It is conceded that human pride, self-esteem, often causes a resentment to proffered counsel. To not know what we are expected to know, and to have such elucidated to us by another, seems to place us in an inferior position to that of our counselor. Therefore, too often there is the inclination to reject advice even if it is worthy and if extended with the best of intentions. Individuals that exhibit such a character are crude and not very advanced in their moral consciousness. They have yet to learn that man is not independent of nature and of his fellows as he would like to presume. He must then be left to his own resources, if he has such an attitude, and he must learn direct from the effects he himself creates. Such learning is obviously slow and is many times *painful*.

If everyone insisted upon learning from immediate experience all that constitutes the helpful knowledge of mankind, he would probably remain in a state of culture little higher than that of a savage. Most of our learning is from the preservation of the *accumulated* experiences of others who have gone before. Suppose we did not go to school to be taught by others! We would need to discover through our own reasoning, for example, the abstract principles of mathematics. Further, if we had sufficient imagination to do so, we would have to slowly develop an alphabet and learn to speak beyond the stage of uttering mere cries incomprehensible to others. All the sciences and arts, their basic laws and principles, if not learned from others, would also have to be discovered personally by us in the span of one short lifetime, if we were to even know their rudiments. Such a process is so absurd that we would not entertain such an idea and therefore we gladly accept textbooks, teachers, and a curriculum for our general education. Why then should we resent a friend, a relative or another, who through kind intentions endeavors to disclose to us certain information which is to our advantage?

The opposite view in connection with this subject must also be considered. It concerns

the individual who says: "The affairs of another are in no respect my own." He is the one who figuratively and literally shrugs his shoulders when he is aware that another is conflicting with laws which may be detrimental to him. This subject involves the proverbial question: "Am I my brother's keeper?" Mystically, the answer to this question is an emphatic *Yes!* with qualifications. Each of us has his own life to live, his own experiences as lessons to be learned through direct contact or through what is imparted by his parents, teachers, relatives, and friends. As human beings, imbued with Divine consciousness, it is our duty to so evolve and extend our self-consciousness that it is not limited to our own immediate welfare. The exalted personality, the expressions of the more comprehensive self, includes compassion, mercy, impersonal love, sympathy, and those affections and sentiments attributed to the spiritual consciousness of man. Certainly, one denying help to another, help which he can give, even in the form of an admonishment, is in violation of the lofty aspects of the higher consciousness within. Such a one is denying the spiritual attribute of his own being. We are spiritually obligated to reveal and display what men call *virtue*. These virtues are actually but courses of action or behavior which correspond to the impulse to do good which we each have, to a varying degree. This "good" is the satisfaction of all aspects of our being.

Being our brother's keeper does not mean being a *director* of his life. It does not mean the assuming of the responsibility of another. Each has his own responsibility. In fact, in most instances, such help should be limited to doing for another what he is *incapable* of doing for himself at the time. Most important, it should not consist of our imposing upon another our own preferences or ends in life. In counseling someone else, avoid exhorting him to accept your personal conclusions, ideas, and ideals. Relate facts, pointing out impersonal laws and principles which are *universal*, that is, those which apply, as against all persons—you and others. There are too many persons who interpret the term "my brother's keeper" to mean the domination of the life of another, the subordination of another to one's will. Such misconduct is an abuse of another; it

brings to the one responsible a karmic effect which in some manner he will not find pleasant.—X

Is Wisdom Inherited or Acquired?

A frater of Midwestern United States—a first visitor to the Forum, we believe—says: "We may presume that the ancient philosophers, like Anaximenes, had access to the wisdom of the ancients who preceded them. Was this access then their storehouse or the source of their philosophy? Could it be also that, having access to a certain amount or part of the ancient wisdom, the philosophers, through their own thinking and reasoning, eventually arrived at their own philosophy? Might it not have been that their personally developed philosophy only confirmed the same ideas had by peoples long before them, such as the ancient Lemurians and Atlanteans? The point I wish to make is this, Is wisdom necessarily inherited? Can it not be acquired by the individual and then be equal to or/and go beyond what the wise of another age taught?"

The frater makes reference to Anaximenes and his contact with sources of wisdom existing prior to his time. Many of the ancient Greeks known to us for their philosophical learning were indubitably influenced by their association with learned sages of the Orient. Egypt, Babylonia, Phoenicia, and Persia had achieved great civilizations and had tremendous learning when Greece was but a land invaded by barbarians from the north. The early traveler visiting the East and Mid-east would have been deeply impressed by the great advancement of these peoples. If observing and permitted, they would have acquired a knowledge of the arts and sciences of which their own people knew little. With all due respect for the great thinkers of ancient Greece, especially before the Hellenic period, it is difficult to determine to what extent that which they expounded was their own thought exclusively and how much of it grew out of the stimulus of contact with the learned peoples of Asia and Africa.

It has been said that Egypt and Babylonia, for example, never produced a true philosophical system. In a sense that is probably correct. There is no known individual or

particular philosophical system that has descended to us from Egypt that is as complete as that, for example, of Democritus, Anaximenes, Plato, or Aristotle. However, in the inscriptions found in Egypt and attributed to the priesthood and in the traditional accounts of the teachings from the mystery schools, are concepts which parallel those taught by the Greeks; that is, they parallel them in profundity and, in some respects, in content. Such Egyptian concepts are not as formalized, that is, not as unified, as those of Greece. They are often interwoven with liturgies. Nevertheless, the ideas are there. Further, anyone who has made any study of the Bhagavad-Gita, the Upanishads, or the Sankhya philosophy of India marvels at how these teachings anticipate much that is found in Western philosophy. In fact, the similarity is so great in even the philosophy of some of the later German idealists that one is impressed with the thought that they must have borrowed some of their ideas from the Indian sources.

Just what do we know about the Greek philosophers' journeys to the East and their studying there? With Thales of Miletus (585 B.C.), began what we call *organized thought* in the West, a rational inquiry into physical phenomena. As a youth, Thales engaged in politics, almost a "must" for every ambitious young Greek of the time. He later turned from politics to becoming a student of nature. He left little in writing of which there can be any certainty of authenticity. What we know of him is mostly gained from the accounts of his contemporaries and later historians, as Pamphila, Herodotus, and Diogenes Laertius.

Pamphila states that Thales learned geometry from the *Egyptians* and that he was the first to inscribe a right-angled triangle in a circle. It is also related that "he had no instructor *except* that he went to Egypt and spent some time with priests there." It must be realized that the priesthoods of Egypt were not concerned alone with sacerdotal matters. They were the sages, the preceptors, the instructors in all the accumulated wisdom of ancient Egypt or that known to ancient man. They were a class selected and prepared for the preservation of knowledge and for the expounding of learning to all those who were qualified to receive

it. Much of the knowledge of such subjects as alchemy, medicine, theology, architecture, and astronomy was the direct result of the researches and discoveries of these priest-hoods.

Though some of the priests were corrupt, as a whole they did not seek to suppress wisdom but extended it to all who met their qualifications. These qualifications did not always apparently require the student and candidate to become a permanent devotee of their cult or religious system. In his introduction to the *mysteries* the neophyte was obliged, in the course of his initiation, to solemnly swear to keep secret certain rituals and elements of the initiation. The other knowledge, the distinguished foreign initiates, as the Greeks, were apparently permitted to divulge with discretion upon their return to their homeland.

Hieronymus informs us that Thales measured the height of the pyramids by the shadow they cast. It is said that "he took this observation at the hour when our shadow is the same length as ourselves." Then he apparently applied the same rule to the pyramids.

Much knowledge of physical laws is attributed to Thales. He is said to be the first to "determine the sun's course from solstice to solstice and, according to some, the first to declare the size of the sun to be one seven hundred and twentieth part of the solar circle." In general, he was the first Greek, of whom we have knowledge, to discuss the physical problems of existence. He definitely departed from a theogenic conception of the creation of the universe, that is, one generated by the gods. Of him it is also said that, being asked what is difficult, he said: "To know oneself." To "What is easy?" he replied: "To give advice to another."

Plato at the age of twenty-eight went to Cyrene, capital of Cyrenaica, on the north coast of Africa. There he visited the learned mathematician, Theodorus. Thence he went to Crotona to consult the philosophers of the great school of learning established there. Subsequently, he, too, went to Egypt "to those interpreting the will of the gods." This latter undoubtedly meant the learned priesthood. It must be recalled that most of the priests paid homage to the gods for what

they themselves actually taught. Each century, new discoveries were attributed, for example, to Hermes Trismegistus or Thoth. It is not mine, but thine, was the spirit of the priesthood. What came to them personally as illumination, they conceived as being the result of a divine influx of wisdom.

While in Egypt, Plato fell sick and was cured by the priests who treated him with sea water. History does not relate the nature of Plato's malady. This particular treatment must have greatly impressed him because it is said that it is the reason Plato spoke the line:

"The sea doth wash away all human ills."

The healing powers of the priesthood also invoked his admiration for it is revealed that he said that the Egyptians excelled all men in the skill of healing. Plato had intended to visit the Magians but was prevented by the wars in Asia.

A great channel by which knowledge reached the West from the East was the learned Pythagoras. He was instrumental in the introduction of much that has become the basis for the subsequent Rosicrucian teachings in the West. Of course, the Rosicrucian philosophy was not altogether eclectic. It was not just borrowed from the East. In each century and every land its members have added the latest knowledge and often far advanced its enlightened teachings.

Pythagoras was born on the island of Samos in the Aegean (582-500 (?) B.C.). Herodotus relates that he was the son of a gem engraver. At an early age, he left Samos and journeyed to the island of Lesbos. He had an introduction to a prominent official there. While on Lesbos, he had three silver flagons (flasks) made. These he took with him as presents to three high priests in *Egypt*. But first it is said that he went to Phoenicia, a land at the time learned in writing, mathematics, and commerce. There he was instructed by Chaldean sages. It must be mentioned that, before arriving in Egypt, Pythagoras had also been instructed in all the mysteries in Greece and foreign countries. These mysteries were initiatic and esoteric schools, as the Orphic and Eleusinian.

While in Egypt, and to his good advantage, Pythagoras received an introduction

to the Pharaoh Amasis. Through the latter's good offices, he undoubtedly gained the permission he received to study in the Egyptian mystery schools. The ancient historians relate that he learned the sacred and ancient hieroglyphic script of the Egyptians. It was in this script that all the secret teachings were recorded. It would seem that Pythagoras was most favorably accepted because it is recorded that he was allowed to enter the sanctuaries, the inner shrines, and initiatory chambers of the great temples. It was there he "was told their sacred lore concerning the gods." Remember that the lore of the gods would mean any great knowledge had by man. It is just as a learned religious person would say today, as a tribute to his god, "My knowledge is by the grace of God." Such knowledge was not just a matter of theological doctrine but consisted of abstract science as mathematics and, as well, medicine, music, and so forth.

Later, Pythagoras went to Italy and established a school at Crotona for the Greek colony located there. His private *initiated* students numbered three hundred, we are told. However, it is related that six hundred persons went to his evening lectures. It would seem that Pythagoras organized at Crotona his *inherited* wisdom into an efficient philosophy consisting of his own thoughts, undoubtedly enlarged by what he learned and making an advancement. His students and initiates went through a rigorous disciplinary regime. "For five years his students and friends had to keep silent, merely listening to his discourses without seeing him until they passed an examination." Thereafter they were admitted to his presence and allowed to see him.

It is well known that Pythagoras is credited with the discovery of the mathematical relationship of musical notes or the mathematical proportion of the scale. He also greatly advanced the principles of geometry. How much of such knowledge, first generally publicized by him, was all his own, acquired as a result of his original thought, and how much was the imparting of what he had been taught during his sojourn in Egypt, perhaps we shall never know.

There is no virgin knowledge. Everything we could possibly know is recorded in the elements of human experience. A latent or

innate knowledge coming from the soul, as some say, must have the medium, the vehicle of actual experience, for its expression. It is only possible for us to think in terms of generally familiar ideas. These ideas are born out of our sense qualities, our sense impressions, for these latter are the substance out of which all our thoughts are constructed. New ideas are so only in their composite. They are not new in their entirety. Consequently, we must have many ideas as a result of experience from which to construct different thought forms or notions.

A person may have what is said to be an original thought as a plan or an idea that is different. Such however, is derived from contemplation or an intuitive integration of the ideas one has previously acquired from experience. One need not be educated to be creative in his thinking. He will nevertheless have to acquire a fount of knowledge from observation or by carefully listening to others. The more we experience and the more we dwell upon such experiences, the more our reason and imagination is stimulated. Examine the writings of a philosopher or sage. You will note that, no matter how profound and how original appear his ideas, they are grounded in an inherited knowledge—that which he has gained from a study of books, from nature, from the lives of others, or from an inquiry into self. The greatest philosophy of all is the one that makes us, by its teachings, use ourselves and the universe in which we dwell as the source of our wisdom.—X

A Realistic Look at Man

Actual experience with reality is sometimes much more effective than the most profound or erudite, even though logical, discourse about it. We speak of the duality of man in our teachings. We refer to man's physical, material side, and we speak of his immaterial side, that is, the Divine essence and the self. The self, as we have said many times, is not an immaterial substance, but, rather, it is an expression or a function of the divine polarity of our being.

Let us put it this way. Life force contributes to the material substance, the biological elements of our being—the cells, flesh,

tissue, bones, the organs. But accompanying that life force is an intelligence, a higher form of consciousness which, as it expresses itself through the more developed physical organism, finally produces that state which we call *self-consciousness*, or the intangible thing we call *self*. Really, this self is just the expression of the consciousness that accompanies life. It is just as the music of an instrument is not a thing in itself, but is an expression of the instrument and that which plays upon it. The body, then, is just a vehicle for the expression of self. The vehicle must be maintained and kept in the most efficient order—which we call *health*. When life force leaves the body, that polarity is absent from it which gives forth the expression which we call *self*. There is nothing left then but the lower polarity manifesting that which we refer to as matter. The matter of the inanimate body has no greater importance than the substance of any other inanimate body. The so-called dead human form is no more important than a dead tree, a rock or minerals, or the sands on the beach.

The form that it still assumes before it completely disintegrates has a certain sentimental value to us. We have an affection for it because of our memory of the expression that came forth from it. But the real value of that form has gone. To use a homely analogy, it is like one having an affection for a musical instrument that is no longer capable of being played. This affection which man has for the body after it no longer functions to produce self, has, in many respects, led him astray. It has caused him to glorify the body and often to give it an importance in his philosophy and religion of which it is not worthy once the consciousness of self has departed from it. Many religious sects stress the point of the preservation of the body after death. They wish to keep the body intact in the hope or belief that at some future time, as resurrection, the same body will be occupied by the same soul-personality which departed from it.

Though in good faith, these believers are not very realistic. The average embalmed body today retains its state but a very short time. The usual type of embalming in no way approaches the efficiency of the em-

balming of the ancient Egyptians. In just a matter of years, the body disintegrates and becomes no longer inspiring, no longer representative of the personality which once was expressed through it. How much better it would have been if that body had been immediately returned to the pristine elements of which it consists rather than to assume a partial form of its previous state! Further, if the divine power on the occasion of a resurrection would be able to restore the highly disintegrated human body into an efficient living one through which the same soul-personality could again express itself, then that same divine intelligence could gather together the elements of a cremated body, and likewise permit the soul to function through it.

The point we are making is that it would really require a divine miracle to restore a disintegrated body to house the same soul-personality upon the occasion of a resurrection. If that miracle is possible, the restoration of the body after cremation is possible, as well. The advantage of cremation is that the body is returned to its simple elements quickly, hygienically, and in a more idealistic form. The body does not have to then slowly disintegrate and go through all of the hideous stages through which it otherwise passes in the transition after death until it eventually becomes merely impalable particles.

We were made deeply conscious of this fact by a recent incident here at Rosicrucian Park. As most of our members know, the Rosicrucian Order maintains in its Museum the largest Egyptian collection in the Western part of the United States. The Rosicrucian Egyptian, Oriental Museum is visited by over *sixty thousand* persons annually, from all parts of the world. The importance of the Museum, its educational value, has brought the Order splendid publicity, and has heightened appreciation of its integrity because of the cultural contribution to the community. As I am dictating, standing at my window looking out upon the lawns, I see walls being raised by workmen to constitute *a new wing* to this Museum. From various parts of the world, the Rosicrucian Order has acquired authentic Egyptian objects. Some of these antiquities are from leading museums in the world; others are from private collec-

tions and other sources of distinction. Just a few days ago we received another shipment of Egyptian antiquities from Europe. For the most part, the articles in this shipment were originally excavated under the direction of the distinguished Egyptologist and archaeologist, Professor *Flinders Petrie*. This shipment included prehistoric pottery dating back to the Proto-Egyptian Period, and a number of other Egyptian objects: utensils, stelae, and the like. There were also some embalmed human remains.

One of these is a mummy of a small child. The remains had been placed in a wooden case for shipment from Egypt to England in 1912. They were in very poor condition, the embalmed body being no longer as one unit. The members were separated and the linen wrapping was shredded. Some of the linen had deteriorated away from the skull exposing the cranium, the teeth, the hair, and the like. To us who are accustomed to working with antiquities, it was not a particularly hideous sight, though not a pleasant one. The original embalmers in ancient Egypt had hoped that the child's body would be preserved against time for eternity, in accordance with their religious concepts. The original excavators that found the body discovered it in this disintegrated state. How much more pleasant it would have been to have had the body returned to its simple elements in the first place, and to think of it just in the sense of the soul-personality that once occupied it.

With this child's body was a wooden cradle which was in a dilapidated condition. Our technician and staff artist will restore this child's cradle which the ancients had entombed with its body. In our Museum, it will again look as it did some three thousand years ago. Our Museum staff, in carefully examining the mummy wrappings and the remains of the cradle, found intact within them a small, copper cymbal. This is shaped much like a small, Oriental gong. It is in an excellent state of preservation, being only slightly corroded. Fragments of the original cord, by which the gong was suspended or carried, still remain. This was the toy of that child, to be used, as it was thought, in the next life. Because of the loosened condition of the mummy wrappings about the skull, it was thought that they

could be entirely removed, but it was then found that this could be done only partially if further damage was to be avoided. This mummy, then, as much of it as can be preserved and made presentable, will be returned to its little cradle with its original wrappings.

It is these experiences with the realities of life that help us evaluate our Rosicrucian doctrines and which permit us to see how sound they really are.—X

Making Cosmic Requests

A member addressing our Forum states: "Rosicrucian friends have often mentioned to me the matter of proper respect for the Cosmic; that is, they feel that it is not right to make of the Cosmic any specific request. They assert that one should merely place himself in the hands of the Cosmic, that is, one should only ask for guidance in the most general way. If a certain thing is needed, if that thing is proper, if one's motive is right, then one may only go so far as to ask the Cosmic for guidance to give unto one the necessary direction, indicating no specific desire on the part of the supplicant. Why should the mystic adopt what seems to be a servile and insincere approach? If one has no fear, if one's purpose and motive are right, why should one not voice his desire, visualize the thing wanted, etc., as indicated in some of the early monographs? Personally, I see no lack of reverence in such a procedure."

Again, the approach to this question is the need for a comprehension of the Rosicrucian, the mystical conception of *Cosmic*. One must not conceive the Cosmic as an anthropomorphic deity, benign, patronizing, and prepared to reach into an infinite source of supply to bring forth the commodity or to invoke the conditions asked for. The Cosmic constitutes the harmonious relationship of all the universal forces and energies which comprise what we term alike the spiritual and natural worlds. The Cosmic includes both the universal consciousness and the expression or laws, if you will, of that consciousness.

The Cosmic seeks to confer no special privileges or benefits upon us. If, however, we make ourselves, through meditation, receptive to its functioning we are then the

recipient of benefits which we would perhaps not ordinarily enjoy. But let us look at the matter in this way. The sun, for analogy, is a source of strength and vitality, and furthers the growth of living things. The sun does not, however, do this by intention or purpose, as those who once deified the sun thought. What follows from the sun as radiant and creative energy does so by the necessity of its nature, not because of a teleological cause. If we wish to participate in the curative and health-giving qualities of sunlight we must put ourselves in relation to the sun. We must go out into its direct rays and bathe in it. The benefits which thereby come to us are not because the sun wants to bestow its qualities upon us or even that we have requested it. Rather, we have brought ourselves into that proper relation to the sun that we cannot avoid receiving the good which it radiates!

In our Rosicrucian and mystical exercises, we practice meditation and by that means we elevate or ascend our consciousness to a level where we become a more direct channel for the higher vibratory impulses of the Cosmic, the universal consciousness. Thus, we receive the manifestation of that consciousness. We participate in those things and those conditions that make it possible for us to gain the end which we desire.

Just how does this desire work? The picture which we frame in our consciousness or, as we say, visualize during meditation, and which we release, as we say, into the Cosmic, is actually passed on to the higher levels of the psychic consciousness of our own being. In the Cosmic there are no ideas such as we experience in our minds. However, when in final and proper attunement with the Cosmic, the flow of the creative power that comes to us from it through the higher levels of self becomes related to the elements of the picture which we formed on the screen of our mind. These higher impulses stimulate our thinking and our subjective and objective minds in a manner that corresponds to the particular picture of our desire. As a result, we have what we call *intuitive impressions* constituting a kind of guidance by which the fulfillment of our desire is facilitated.

Let us use a physical example to explicate this point. Let us consider a red glass, that

is, a glass colored *red*, as being the desire which we have in mind. Sunlight, we shall say, is the universal consciousness or the Cosmic mind. In raising the glass up so that the sunlight falls upon it, we find then that the only color which is transmitted through the glass is a red light. All other wave lengths of the sun's spectrum are filtered out. So, too, it is with our *desire*, which is raised to the higher levels of our consciousness. Only those aspects of the Cosmic Intelligence which are associated with that desire, as will further it, reach down into our objective consciousness in the form of guidance or intuitive impressions. Thus, we are inspired to do certain things, and which, in effect, make it possible for us to realize the particular end which we seek.

When our desire, or "request to the Cosmic" is impersonal, or specifically, is for the benefit of another, we become the instrument for bringing that other person into harmony with the Cosmic. Our thoughts about the person whom we desire to aid, if intense enough and in accordance with our mystical instruction, bring our consciousness in attunement with the deeper levels of self, of this other mind. Our desire to help them, in turn, causes those aspects of the universal consciousness which are most needed for the help, to be focused upon the consciousness of the one for whom we seek assistance. In this sense, we are really directing the Cosmic forces: by our placing ourselves and those with whom we are in attunement, in a relationship with the Cosmic to receive the most benefit.

In connection with absent treatments, we always urge our fratres and sorores, who are endeavoring to heal another, to be cer-

tain that the patient is *agreeable* to the treatment given. This voluntary accord then brings the patient, the recipient of the treatment, in closer harmony with the one desiring to help—and brings both, in turn, in closer harmony with the Cosmic forces.

The *ethics* involved in requesting Cosmic help must not be omitted. This ethics consists of asking for that which is proper. This propriety means that we must not request that which would deprive another of what he is morally and naturally entitled to or which would bring harm in any form to others. Mystically, a selfish request is not something from which you will benefit, for it is your right to further self, materially, intellectually, and spiritually! After all, the law of self-preservation is the exercise of self—the furtherance of self in all of its aspects. If we did not further self, there would be no further self. If you request something from which you *alone* will derive advantage, which would be of no advantage to *anyone else*, then it is truly a selfish request and should not be Cosmically requested, for the Cosmic will not respond to such an appeal. By "respond," we mean that you will not be brought into that proper accord by which you would be a channel for the Cosmic forces you need.

Under these circumstances, we see that it is not Cosmically wrong or imprudent for us to request from the Cosmic what we desire. We repeat, however, that we must always be cognizant that the Cosmic does not directly provide what we seek. Rather, it puts us in accord with those agencies, those factors of which it consists and by which we, as individuals, may then create or discover in nature that which we wish.—X



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No. I

SOUND AND SILENCE

I lie in the tall grass
And hear the sound of wind
Blowing
And grass rustling.

Down in the grass I hear
No sound. With each green blade
I breathe in time
To silence.

Down in the soundless grass
I hear beyond the tone
Of silence
Music of earth.

In music of earth
I hear the One.

—Ruth Phelps

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Greetings!



PRAYER, ITS USE AND MISUSE

Dear Fratres and Sorores:

War makes particularly conspicuous the paradoxical use of prayer. The peoples of the involved nations—friends and enemies alike—enter their temples of worship and solemnly pray that they might be victorious. Frequently, peoples of the same faith in opposing nations are praying in like manner to the same conceived god. Obviously, both peoples believe they are justified in their respective causes. Consequently, to the sincere religionist of a defeated country, it must seem that his god has forsaken him, or that, at least, prayer has lost its efficacy. It is this circumstance that has confused many religionists and caused many other persons to regard prayer as being contiguous to superstition.

The value of prayer is directly proportionate to the manner in which it is used. Prayer, in itself, as an act or a series of acts, is not infallible. Prayer consists of a number of such elements as: to whom we pray, how and when we pray, and what we pray for. Unless these elements are integrated rightly, prayer must of necessity fail. However, no matter how often a prayer may not be productive of the intended results, certain beneficial results are experienced; such is an example of using nearly all of the elements correctly, which we shall later explain.

From the rational point of view, prayer is a petition. Like any kind of request, it may either be made silently, or be vocative. When emotionally moved, it is instinctive to give voice to our desires. The voice has power in its utterances. The sound of the voice relieves the emotions. It suggests the invoking of the force of the desire—physically as well as mentally. In fact, it is nearly impossible to prevent a vocative response accompanying intense emotional agitation. We are inclined to cry out, or speak out, under such circumstances.

If prayer is a petition, there must be something or someone to whom it is directed. Obviously, we do not pray to ourselves, that is, to our own mental or physical being. If

we believe that we are intellectually and physically capable of executing a plan, or acquiring something, we proceed entirely according to our own initiative. Prayer is, therefore, an admission of an actual or imagined *self-sufficiency*. This self-insufficiency causes a tendency in the individual to turn outward, to put dependency upon a force, agency, or source, which is external to himself. Patently, our conception of this external source determines to a large degree, the nature of our prayer. A primitive being with a polytheistic conception imagines a plurality of gods; to him, such gods may be resident in inanimate things, as rocks, the sea, or in storm clouds. In his conception, each of such gods is distinctively productive of certain needs of man. Thus, the individual has to evaluate his gods—to one he turns for health, to another for strength, to still another for support against his enemies.

When man seeks to communicate with a power vaster than himself, he devises various means of gaining the attention of such a deity. For example, when men call upon a human potentate, or tribal head, it is necessary to have the potentate disposed to their ends; consequently they seek to propitiate him by a presentation of gifts, the gifts being whatever men consider of value. Sometimes, the approach to the god is the attempt to create a favorable environment in which the deity may receive them. Thus, theurgical rites of music, song and dance, are used. In following this method of prayer, two things are observed: first, there is the belief that the deity may grant the request, if he is sufficiently pleased with the acts of the petitioner; second, there is no question of the motive of the petitioner. It is not a question as to whether the results of the prayer are contrary to natural law or as to whether they may work an injustice upon other mortals. The psychology in such instances is very crude. It is, in reality, conferring an *anthropomorphic* nature upon the god. God is conceived as being like mortals, possessed of vanity, easily gratified by gifts, homage, and ostentation. He is further conceived as being

capable of dispensing his gifts or conferring his powers, just as some earthly absolute king—without regard to reason or justice. Each man can, consequently, obtain whatever he wishes from the god if he is able to perform the proper theurgical rites. Men thus vie with each other to gain the *secrets* of how best to *influence* the gods. It is this kind of misconception that has encouraged priesthoods from the earliest known society. Priests were men believed to possess or to be trained in the proper way to invoke the pleasure of the gods for men's benefit.

Though we speak of this practice as being primitive, yet this elementary idea has persisted down through the ages greatly to influence the dogmas and creeds of many religions extant today. A religious sect may decree a certain mode of behavior upon the part of the individual. It may decree that you must drop coins into a box, you must regularly attend certain ceremonies, you must repeat specific creeds and enter into authorized rites. If you comply, it is presumed that you have appeased God, or made the proper approach, and that the deity will incline his will toward the fulfillment of the prayer offered. I do not need to designate the sects who encourage these practices; they are known to you, being common in your community. These peoples, then, pray in good faith and are, of course, most often disappointed in the results and frequently disillusioned as well.

There is still another orthodox conception of prayer, which, though it transcends the previous example, is yet quite primitive and potentially a failure. It continues to recognize a personal god as exercising an arbitrary will, *but* he does so for beneficial reasons. The individual confers upon his god not only the power of accomplishment but the highest moral value of which he is able to conceive. In other words, it is believed that the god is capable of anything, but will only do that which is in accord with *moral good*. This type of religionist, then, will not petition his god to grant his prayer if it conflicts with, or is contrary to, what he conceives as morally right. He will not ask his god to strike another person dead or to give him money which he should not have. However, this religionist will have no hesitancy in asking the fulfillment of a prayer which he thinks just, no matter how contrary it may be to the necessity of universal, or Cosmic, order. He

would not hesitate to ask God to stop a war which men themselves have brought on. Psychologically, to such individuals, god is believed arbitrarily to exercise his will as against the very laws and causes he himself has established—if man in good faith and with moral purpose asks it.

The illogicalness of such prayer never occurs to the petitioner. He may pray for his god to stop what another religionist, in equally good faith, is praying to be continued. The fall weather in California affords an excellent example of such an anthropomorphic conception of god and prayer. In late September the California prune growers are drying their fruit in the sun; an early and continued rain might prove very ruinous to their crop. Conversely, the cattle raisers at that time of the year are desperately in need of rain for pasturage, especially after the long rainless California summer. A cattleman, if he were one of the religionists we have been speaking of, would pray for rain; concomitantly, a prune grower would pray that it would *not* rain. If God were to exercise *arbitrary will*, opposing the natural law of climatic conditions, whose prayer would He favor? Such a religionistic view places the deity in a ludicrous position and makes religion vulnerable to atheism. If the Divine will could and would function arbitrarily, it would disrupt all Cosmic unity. There would be no dependency whatsoever. It is because Cosmic laws perform consistently and are immutable by the necessity of their nature that man has an assurance of dependability of the Divine or Cosmic principles.

The mystic's conception and practice of prayer is not only the most productive of results but it is the most logical method as well. The mystic avers that all things are possible within the Divine consciousness of God except that which would oppose the very nature of God. Since the Divine Mind is all things, there is nothing which can oppose it. Therefore, a negative request or petition, remains nugatory. One should not expect to find, for example, darkness in light, for where there is light there cannot be darkness; thus the mystic does not ask for the impossible in his prayers. A mystic never asks for the setting aside of a Cosmic, or natural law, which he may have invoked by his own acts, whether due to malice or to ignorance. He is a firm believer in *cause*

and *effect*. He realizes that to ask that a law, invoked by himself, be mitigated in his favor would be requesting the impossible.

A mystic does not ask that there be conferred upon him special blessings. He knows that in the Cosmic scheme there are no preferred mortals. Further, he is quite cognizant that everything already is, or will be, by the eternal law of change. There is nothing held back. In the laws of the Cosmic, everything consistent thereto can eventually be brought about by the *mind* of man. Things are not transmitted to man, rather it is man that directs and assembles the Cosmic powers to which he has access, in order to bring them about. The mystic does not ask for a completed particular, but rather for the *illumination* whereby it might be materialized through his efforts; or, if his desire for a particular is not proper, he may ask that the desire be removed from him. Knowing the limitation of his own objective self, the mystic asks that if he cannot be shown how to satisfy his need, that he be shown how to rid himself of the false desire which causes him to think it necessary. The mystic thus proves that he does not insist that his purposes are infallible. He likewise indicates he wants to be certain that he does no other person an injustice by his desires through requesting something he should not. The mystic realizes that with proper understanding, many of the things we now pray for would lose their importance to us and would be shown to be insignificant and unworthy of a Divine appeal. Many of the things with which we torment ourselves, and regard as being so essential to our welfare, are so because they have not been analyzed in the light of their broader aspect, namely, their relation to the whole Cosmic plan.

The mystic, in petitioning the Cosmic, turns his consciousness *inward* instead of directing his plea to a distant external entity or power. The Cosmic is in him, the mystic realizes; it is not just in the reaches of space. He knows, further, that his Soul will answer his petition. The Soul is of the Cosmic and it will guide him to *self-action*. Prayer, to the mystic, is really a *consultation* between the two selves of man. It is an appeal from the mortal mind to the immortal mind of Self within. The answer to a prayer is, the mystic knows, actually an insight into Divine wisdom through proper attunement. The mystic thence is able properly to evaluate his desires

and he is able to act in the light of what is Cosmically right and possible.

When a mystic asks for something which is not forthcoming, he experiences none of the disappointment which the religionist feels after his unfulfilled prayers. Whether or not the particulars are forthcoming the mystic has nevertheless received an *understanding* which has disclosed to him the unnecessary of his appeal. Prayer, therefore, is always satisfying to the mystic. Psychologically as well, prayer is beneficial to any man if it is mystically practiced. Prayer requires humility. It requires submission to the better side of our nature. It puts us *en rapport* with the more subtle impulses of our being.

Prayers are usually of three kinds. There are prayers of *confession* when man indicates to the god of his heart that he is contrite and admits a violation of his moral ideals. Then, there are prayers of *intercession*; these are prayers in which man asks to be guided so as to prevent undesired effects of certain causes. There are also prayers of *gratitude*, like those of the Psalms where man hails the majesty of the Divine and expresses joy in realizing his own Divine nature. Of these three kinds, the mystic indulges the latter—the prayer of gratitude—more frequently. In doing so, the mystic avoids the necessity of the other two. If we recognize the Divine, and commune periodically with Self, which is of it, we acquire such personal mastery of our own being that prayers of intercession or prayers of confession are not required.

The following is a prayer embodying all of the mystical elements that we have just enumerated:

May the divine essence of the Cosmic cleanse me of all impurities of mind and body that I may commune with the Cathedral of the Soul. May my mortal consciousness be so enlightened that any imperfections of my thinking may be revealed to me, and may I be given the power of will to correct them. I humbly petition that I may perceive the fullness of nature and partake thereof, ever consistent with the Cosmic good. So Mote it Be!

Faternally,

RALPH M. LEWIS,

Imperator

(Reprinted during absence of the Imperator)

Symbolism of the Snake

A frater of South Africa arises and addresses our Forum. He says: "The Egyptian symbol of Cosmic consciousness is a snake with a great number of smaller snakes. My question is, What connection does the symbol of a snake have with Cosmic consciousness?"

To most persons a snake is revolting, or a living thing to be feared. It seems, therefore, incongruous to them that a snake should represent the highest spiritual attainment of man. The snake or serpent in symbolism, mythology, and religion, may be traced to the custom of primitive peoples to associate animals with powers and attributes which their appearance or habits seem to suggest. Nature as an environment is more dominant over, and asserts a greater influence upon, primitive man than on civilized man. In civilization, man creates artificial surroundings in which are centered most of his life and interests. As a consequence, he is less conscious of the elements of nature. The primitive man, not being beset by a vast number of products of his own creation, has his attention centered upon natural phenomena. The sun, moon and stars, the seasons, as well as the functions of animals, reptiles and birds, fascinate him. Thus he is a greater naturalist, insofar as his observations are concerned, than is civilized man.

The observing aborigine notices in what manner the functions of other living things either equal or excel his own. Whenever their virtues or powers exceeded man's, his admiration and awe were elicited. The serpent, in primitive culture, has been thought to be possessed of great wisdom and cunning. This is suggested by its silent, quick, gliding movement without either wings or feet. This unique power of locomotion, in contrast to that of most animals and birds, and of man himself, was mystifying to the simple mind and engendered the idea that the serpent embodied a divine wisdom and power.

Added to the serpent's fascination and mystery was its ability to disappear suddenly as though it had been transformed into an invisible entity. The beady eyes of the reptile with their glint also intrigued the imagination, as evidenced by the numerous myths which concern "snake's eyes." The

colorful and geometric patterns of the snake's skin caused it to appear beautiful. This to the primitive mind appeared as a distinguishing attribute, lending the snake a kind of supernatural importance. The aborigine nonetheless was impressed by the strength of the larger reptiles and the ability of many to inflict great harm and almost instant death upon man. The strange phenomenon of the serpent's casting off its skin implied that it had the faculty of renewing its life and thus was *immortal*. That the serpent was able to accomplish these things signified that it was imbued with a wise spirit. In devious ways, some peoples came to believe that the serpent was beneficial to man.

The disappearance of serpents into holes or crevices in the earth caused them to be thought of as having a chthonian characteristic, that is, that they were related to the nether world or the subterranean regions. Being a dweller of the regions below the earth did not, with many ancient peoples, imply an evil association. Entities in the world below had their virtues and were often thought of as beneficent beings. In myths, serpents have been said to be "guardians of hidden treasures." This notion probably arose from their chthonian characteristics and the belief that the nether world possessed treasures equal to or greater than those found upon the surface.

Numerous snake cults have existed throughout the centuries, in which either the serpent was worshipped or was symbolic of a god or a supernatural agency. They have frequently been identified with cults of ancestor worship. This conception probably arose from the fact that serpents were often found inhabiting the abandoned places of the dead. Extant myths also connect snakes with the formation or creation of bodies of water as lakes, rivers or seas. Since some areas inhabited by primitive peoples contained large marshlands in which serpents flourished, they, by association of ideas, became the dominant spirit of water.

As one studies the various myths, in which snakes play strange and fantastic roles, it may seem difficult to comprehend just what gave rise to such conceptions. These ideas are not rooted in any observation of nature by man. They are principally the product of his imagination and dreams.

Primitive man's fear and awe of snakes caused him frequently to dream of them. The dreams, even as our own, were often but mere random ideas without causal connection. The snake is the central idea of the dream. Concomitantly the emotion of fear would call forth irrelevant experiences which became associated with the snake in the dream. An example of this is found in the myths held by certain tribes which relate that a giant serpent came forth from a volcanic eruption and created the world. Man's fertile and unbridled imagination concerning what a snake might do or had done, when incorporated in a dream, became a reality to the primitive mind. The dream state was the spirit side of man, an experience he thought to have been had by his invisible self. Consequently, the dream was transferred to objectivity as an actual event and included in the myth.

Nearly every culture and civilization known to man has, in one way or another, made use of the serpent in its religion and mythology. We shall make mention of but a few of the most impressive examples. In ancient Egypt, the snake was worshipped but this was particularly during the decline of the great civilization. Earlier among the priesthood the cobra and asp were symbolic of the powers and virtues of gods. The uraeus or cobra, so frequently used in Egyptian decoration of wearing apparel and statuary, and for architectural ornamentation, was a symbol of fire or the solar disk. It also was representative of the great heat and creative force of the solar deity. The uraeus thus commonly appears on the crown of statues of the solar-god and his representatives, the Pharaohs and high priests. Statues in the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum show the uraei. Goddesses of fertility, as Isis, are frequently shown with the uraei and this causes the snake to likewise become the symbol of fruitfulness.

The asp is often referred to in ancient Egyptian inscriptions as "the eye of God." The glint of the serpent's eye, the fascination or appeal which it often has to man, seemed to allude to an effusion from it of a subtle intelligence or force which was related by the Egyptians to the eyes of their gods. It is doubtful if the priesthood actually thought there was any nexus between the asp's eyes and the god. They most likely

conceived the eyes as symbolic of divine sight and the power of supernatural vision. Symbolic or otherwise, the snake was given a place of importance in ancient Egypt. Snakes, like other animals and birds, were embalmed and placed in their own little sarcophagi (mummy coffins). In the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum may be seen one of these little ancient wooden coffins with an embalmed asp in it.

The Egyptians, as other peoples to follow them, connected serpents with life itself and with healing. Just how this conception arose is speculative. Again, it may be traced to the shedding of the skin, to which phenomenon the primitive peoples attached much significance. Since the snake seemed to die, because of its periods of semi-dormancy, and then (after shedding its skin) become vigorous again, it suggested that it had great restorative powers. Snake flesh was eaten by the cruder peoples, so that the snake's virtues might be transmitted to the sick or the afflicted. An oil or grease made from the snake is applied by peoples of many tribes to the afflicted parts of the human anatomy and is thought to have effective curative properties. It is not many years ago, in the backward sections of the United States, that itinerant salesmen, posing as physicians, offered, at lucrative prices, bottles of snake oil and salve to effect "miraculous cures."

The Biblical account in the Book of Genesis, reveals that, among the ancient Semitics, the snake was associated with great power by which it could accomplish almost anything it desired. It was an agency of a supernatural being or had such a being at times embodied within it. However, the snake was not always a symbol of evil but often one of benevolence and virtue. According to the interpretation of one prominent ethnologist, the original story of the serpent and man had two trees in the garden: one represented *life*; the other, *death*. God besought man to partake of the fruit of the tree of life. The serpent reigned over the tree of death and he induced man to eat of its fruit. The temptation, therefore, according to this version, was not one of iniquity and immorality, but of a choice between life and death. Among many of the ancients, as the Babylonians, death was a condition of horror and was associated with

all those attributes which man later assigned to the evil state. This is perhaps the reason why eventually the snake was associated with Satan.

The snake as a symbol was prominent in the ceremonies and initiation rites of the Greek mystery schools. According to Clement of Alexandria, noted theologian and historian, in the Dionysiac mysteries a golden snake was let down the bosom of the candidate and removed from the lower parts. The exact connection of the rite is not known but we may presume that the snake denoted a godly and sexual power. By means of the snake's gliding over the bosom, a marriage of the candidate to the spiritual principles, or the divinity recognized by the mystery schools, was accomplished. It was undoubtedly an experience that would test the nerves and fortitude of the candidate. In Eleusis, the site of the renowned Eleusinian mysteries, also according to Clement of Alexandria, an object was taken from a *cesta*, a small basket carried on the wrist, and put into the bosom. This was perhaps an inanimate representation of the serpent.

In one period of Greek history, snakes were kept in a shrine or sanctuary and were fed by priestesses. They were thus preserved for the omens of health and plenty which they would display. Certain activities, natural movements of the reptiles, were interpreted as suggestions of cures to the sufferer or as an indication that a woman would be fruitful. We may presume that the sagacious priests did not actually believe that the actions of the reptiles constituted signs having any relation to cures. The gullible populace came to the temples for advice and wanted some sign. Their fear and awe of snakes and the primitive traditions connected with these emotions gave the priests an opportunity to support their own personally expressed views. Priesthoods are not disinclined to resort to similar psychological deceptions today, not by employing snakes but inanimate objects, as amulets and fetishes, which serve the same purpose.

Asklepios, a great Greek physician, appears in some myths as a snake. The snake as a symbol is often shown entwined about Asklepios' staff. The caduceus or winged staff of Mercury, the symbol of the modern medical physician, also has, as part of its

symbolic form, two serpents entwined about it.

In Pythagorean symbolism, the snake, forming a circle by placing its tail in its mouth, depicts eternity—the universe without beginning or end, complete in itself and all wise. In the book *Behold the Sign*, a work on ancient symbolism, is an illustration of the serpent forming a circle in the manner just described, with an hourglass in its center. The hourglass represents time and eternity; the serpent, the universe without beginning or end.

Among esoteric schools, the circle, in the form of a serpent, is often used to symbolize *Cosmic consciousness*. It alludes to the unity of man's mind with the Universal Intelligence. It depicts the completion of that cycle when the human consciousness has a realization of that mind or universal consciousness of which it is an extension. The serpent used in this manner is but an inheritance of the ancient symbolism of wisdom. Its circular form denotes completion or fulfillment.—X

Strangely Familiar Places

A soror in San Francisco addresses our FORUM and says: "This is what has puzzled me for years. Often in visiting an outdoor scene or building, I have a distinct feeling that I have seen and been at that particular place at some previous time. I know that I have actually not been there in person in this life. Also, I know I have not seen the place in a printed picture. I could explain the sensation or feeling as a memory of a former incarnation, except for the fact that in most cases the buildings and scenery, as a landscape, are *new* in this world—from five to ten years old. Further, I am from a family that can trace its ancestry back hundreds of years, and no member of it ever visited America. What causes these feelings of recognition of such scenes and buildings?"

As the soror states, the fact that the places are new precludes their being a memory of a previous incarnation. Consequently, the explanation centers in the fantasies of the subconscious mind. The subjective part of our mind creates thought patterns from objective experiences, often without our will or direction. The most common example of such phenomenon is our dreams. We dream of

people, of incidents, and places which have no actual parallel in our objective experiences. In other words, we dream of many things which actually have never occurred to us nor been perceived by us during our awakened state. When we are asleep the will and the reasoning powers are dormant. The subjective self is undisciplined by the objective, and can and does release from memory elements of actual experiences. Under the influence of our uncontrolled emotions, the subjective combines these into fanciful images or dreams. Even the most fantastic dreams, of course, have in them elements which have been experienced. Otherwise, we could not realize them. The dream, however, in its entirety, may be strange and quite unlike any actual objective experience. Then again, our imagination during our awakened state, our so-called flights of fancy, reaches through and makes impressions upon the subconscious. These impressions recur in our objective minds occasionally, under a new form of arrangement of ideas that on the one hand seem new to us, and yet there is a strange recognition or familiarity about them.

Let me use an analogy to try to explain this, shall we say, odd mental functioning which we all experience at times. We may think of man's progress upward spiritually and in the attainment of knowledge as a climb or an ascent. We may think of him laboring up a great stairway, a stairway representing the steps of accomplishment and the things to be learned or done. At the top of the great stairway, which seems to run almost into infinity, is the peak of attainment. In our minds, we vaguely symbolize this attainment as a beautiful castle or a magnificent white palace. The beauty of the design and its pure whiteness denote perfection or the illumination which is had as a reward for the struggle upward. Now, perhaps we never actually formulated this whole scene in our thinking, as I have described it here. However, the idea was inchoate in our thinking; that is, it existed in its elements as a result of our meditations on our own progress and struggle upward in our own spiritual development. Perhaps only for a moment did we vaguely have such an allegorical conception of man's intellectual and spiritual conquests, and then perhaps we dismissed it because of the invasion of other

thoughts. Nevertheless, if when we were thinking of these different symbols—the clouds, the castle, the winding stairway—if there were any real emotional emphasis or feeling behind the thoughts, they would register in our subjective minds. In the subjective they would then come to form a *thought pattern*. The different impressions would be registered in memory as an image, or as a mental picture. Psychology calls these impressions *eidetic* images.

Perhaps months later we might be traveling in a foreign mountainous country. It is the first time we have ever been in that country in our lifetime. As we journey along, suddenly there appears at some distance a lofty rocky eminence. It is an actual mountain crag. It seems to reach up into the clouds which hover about its top. In a crevice in the crag, we see winding upward a graceful flight of stairs, their whiteness glistening against the somber, brownish-black of the rocky formation. Following them upward with our eyes we see indistinctly on the peak an edifice resplendent in the sun. It almost seems to float in the fleecy clouds which surround it like a collar. Its crenelated top and turrets penetrate the clouds in a fairy-tale-like manner. Immediately the whole scene seems akin or familiar to us. To ourselves we say: "Why I recognize this! I feel that I have been here before." Our guide then informs us that the stairs and the edifice have only been constructed ten years before and that no photograph of it has ever been published. Nevertheless, the sensations of familiarity persist.

What has occurred in such an experience? What is the cause of it? The cause of it is the psychological principles we have enumerated. The objective experience of what we have just seen participates in the symbolic idea once formed, and now firmly established in our subjective mind. The moment we see an actual similar scene, the symbolic idea is released from memory in the subjective and associated with the present experience. We are, therefore, conscious of two things—first, what we experience objectively; and, second, the memory experience of our symbolic idea. The memory of the symbolic idea is vague. We do not know that it was engendered by our imagination, that is, thinking in the past, of man climbing upward spiritually. Consequently it seems like the

recollection of some remote, actual objective experience.

All of us have certain ideals of beauty, whether visual or as harmony of sound. These ideals are often very indistinct in our minds. We cannot exactly express them in terms or words, or even in designs. However, these ideals become very firmly impressed on the subjective mind. Whenever in our life we experience in actual form, as a musical composition or as an object, that which produces sensations or feelings corresponding to those ideals, it immediately engenders familiar feelings. It releases from the subjective mind those images which were associated with the ideals we have had, and accompanying those images is the feeling of familiarity. We are thus confused as to whether we have seen the objects somewhere before. Knowing these psychological principles, it sometimes is not difficult to trace the cause of such feelings of recognition. If the objects are newly built, that of course disposes of having seen them in a previous incarnation. The next thing, then, is always to inquire into our ideals and flights of imagination, as to whether there is any parallel between them and that which we now objectively seek.—X

(Reprinted during absence of the Emperor)

Sanctum Meditation

We are frequently asked, "What thoughts should we have in mind when we enter our sanctum or conduct our sanctum convocation?"

In answer to that, first let me again remind every member of the purpose of a sanctum. It is a sanctuary within your home or wherever you establish it. It is as well a temple dedicated to the highest ideals and concepts of which you are capable.

Let us analyze those two purposes. A sanctuary is a refuge; it is a place to which you may retire from the usual conditions and circumstances with which you are confronted daily. It is not necessarily a place of escape; it is not a negative condition or environment where you are merely avoiding responsibilities or avoiding the struggle with things that should be met and mastered. Rather, it is a place which you wish to keep free from the usual encumbrances and distractions so as to begin to build something you want to

accomplish, something you do not wish to be affected by the other elements of your daily world. It is like putting up a retaining wall to keep sand or mud from sliding down into an excavation and interfering with the construction of a foundation.

So your sanctum is a niche where you can shut out the problems of the day, the distractions, the meanness and pettiness of the world, and have an opportunity to commune with your own soul and listen to the softer voice of self—a place where you will not be rudely interrupted by objective sounds and impressions. Your sanctum is as well a little eminence upon which you can stand to look up, without obstruction, to God, to reach up without interference into the Cosmic with your consciousness—that, then, is what we mean by the sanctum being a sanctuary.

The sanctum derives considerable from your presence. The little area in your room, whether it is just one corner or closet, or even the whole room itself, takes on something of your personality. It is affected by the thoughts you have in mind, by the intensity of your emotional feelings. You know that physical environment does radiate the influences of the personalities which have been brought in touch with it. You have gone into hotel rooms or the homes of others and have sensed immediately either a harmonious condition or distracting vibrations, depending upon the conduct of those who occupied the premises. So when you pray in your sanctum, when you think of the Cosmic, when you contemplate the mysteries of life and existence, when you express the finer and higher aspects of yourself, you are dedicating that area to those ends, and everything in the sanctum—the cross, the candlesticks, the apron you wear upon your person—each of these things reminds you of some truth, some mystical principle, and prepares you for Cosmic attunement. Your sanctum, then, is a temple, really a pantheon, because it contains a collection of those things representing the spiritual and soul interests of your being.

One is permitted to take into his sanctum the problems with which he is confronted in his daily affairs. If he wants advice on a business problem, if he wants to know what is the right course of action, he has a right to visualize his problem and to release it through his subjective mind into the Cosmic

for an intuitive impression, for Cosmic instruction and guidance, as has been explained in our monographs. One has a right as well to use and apply during his sanctum convocation the therapeutic or Rosicrucian principles of healing to assist a member of his family, a friend, or oneself. One has a right as well to make of the sanctum a Cosmic laboratory and to use the various exercises dealing with mental telepathy and projection, and the stimulation of the various psychic centers, because one knows that the vibrations and environment of the sanctum are conducive to better results than elsewhere, and so long as the use of these principles is for knowledge and ultimately to acquire power by which one can improve oneself and make valuable contributions to society, one is not out of order in such conduct.

But the sanctum must not be used exclusively for selfish interests. I do not mean just for our own person, but for all those that our personal interest includes; that is, the members of our family and friends. The use of the sanctum should also be for strictly humanitarian purposes and for impersonal reasons in the broadest sense of the term. How many times do you enter your sanctum for the purpose of directing thoughts of encouragement, of help, of love and support toward those great personalities of the world who are formulating or trying to put into operation some plan which will make for peace and better international understanding? When you read your daily newspaper or news magazines and read of some congressman or even some businessman, some writer or actor or artist who is struggling against great odds, unselfishly, to expound an idea or to exhort a government to support a plan which will make for world unity, do you ever try to give him Cosmic support during a meditation period?

One of the objectives of the Rosicrucian Order, the principal one possibly, is to develop the individual, make him more proficient, more efficient, more tolerant and understanding, so he may become a harmonious, constructive member of society. But you also have the obligation of not just working upon yourself but of using the Cosmic principles and formulas which have been divulged to you to assist others who may not be members of AMORC but who are worthy of becoming a useful influence in society. Without di-

vulging any of the confidential aspects of our monographs, which are left for your private study, may I remind some of you of the Law of Assumption, such as is given in detail in the Ninth and Twelfth Degrees, and also the Law of Affinity.

Do you realize that these principles were meant not merely for your particular benefit but so that you might also help others to do the things they should do and to help them accomplish what is Cosmically right? Many of our members have had amazing results in doing this. They have read of some individual fearlessly struggling to manifest some worthy end against tremendous odds, and they have tried Cosmically to assist that individual. They have felt as though they had contacted him. They have felt that they had put into motion the Cosmic creative powers through strengthening him, and in doing this they had certain thoughts in mind. They were afterwards quite amazed to read in a speech by such an individual words or phrases that were identical to the thoughts they had in mind in their own sanctum, and such words and phrases in the speech of that person stood out and were so arranged as to make his address especially effective and resulted in his winning his point.

Coincidence, you might say! But was it? So the next time you enter your sanctum, do so for an exclusively humanitarian and impersonal purpose. Let us help, all of us, periodically in this matter. We might say it is a form of Cosmic charity.—X

(Reprinted during absence of the Emperor)

Illusions of the Senses

Perhaps one of the most difficult tasks is to convince people of the fallibility of their senses. If a person appears to have normal eyesight and no deficiency in any of his receptor senses, he is usually confident that the world is as he perceives it. As Locke, the English philosopher, pointed out, in his famous essay on the human understanding, most men believe that their senses mirror the external world. They are convinced that things quite closely resemble the ideas which they have of them.

Our consciousness of the physical existence of our bodies and of external objects is a *grand illusion*. The application of reason and analysis to much of what we *believe* and

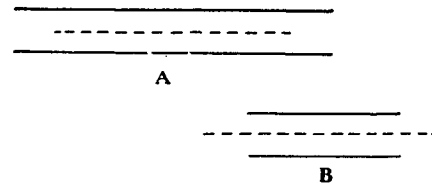
say that we *know* would excoriate this belief and knowledge of its existence to us. There are many self-deceptions which bring to us, for certain intervals of time, consolation, peace of mind, and a false sense of security. Perhaps it is just as well that many persons are not as rational and as analytical about their experiences as they could be. If they were, then one by one they would lose those things, those beliefs, and thoughts, which have brought them a certain comfort during the years. The small child finds ecstasy in the expectation that Santa Claus is going to visit him from out a mythical land and shower him with gifts. The older boy or girl is made to find a certain satisfaction in the statement that the stork delivers his newborn sister or brother. Many adults find deep satisfaction in the anthropomorphic concept of God, picturing him as a benign elderly gentleman with a long flowing beard, who arbitrarily decides the events of each person's life.

The problem is whether to disabuse such minds with *knowledge* or to allow them the bliss of ignorance. There is always the danger that the shock of reality may make them skeptical of all observation and make life a bitter ordeal. On the other hand, an intelligent parent will eventually inform the child that Santa Claus doesn't exist and that the stork did not bring his baby sister. The tactful method, and the proper one, is to make the person happy in the substitution of the new knowledge. He must be made to realize that it is for his own benefit ultimately to know the *truth*. For analogy, we might walk blindfolded for a considerable distance in order to be spared many unpleasant sights. However, it would not be advisable to advocate such enforced blindness indefinitely, because the very sight that might see unpleasant things could also help us avoid serious pitfalls that would prove to be painful.

Philosophically, it can be sustained that all our conceptions of the actuality of the external world are but illusions. Nothing is as we conceive it to be, matter, space, life and the like. Yet we cannot become like Pyrrho, the skeptic of old, of whom it is said that he had so little faith in what he perceived that he refused to leave the roadside when a vehicle approached and, consequently, was injured. We know fundamentally

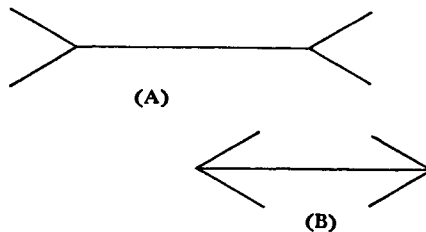
our senses create within the mind many ideas which we have. They intercept external stimuli and present them to the consciousness in the nature of certain sensations which we interpret in a specific manner. We know psychologically that *spatial* relations, for example, the nearness, farness, smallness, and largeness of objects, depend upon several factors such as direction, extent or size of the stimulating object, and the distance or depth of the stimulus. The three dimensions are very fundamentally related to the structure of the eye itself. What we can and should do, therefore, is to accept these illusions as natural, as necessary to our welfare. They arise directly out of our organic structure. We cannot annihilate our senses and still live in a physical world. However, when it is known that we compound our illusions by wrong interpretations or by confusion of the normal sensations, we should then correct such errors. The purpose of the following is, therefore, to acquaint you with a number of common illusions, and by this means we hope to have you question every empirical experience before adding it to your category of dependable knowledge.

First, it is appropriate to distinguish between *illusion*, *delusion*, and *hallucination*. Delusion refers to false judgment and error in belief. Likewise, illusions must not be confused with hallucinations. The latter refer to the apparent perception of something when there is no corresponding organic stimulus. Perhaps the commonest form of illusions are optical ones. These illusions frequently occur in geometric patterns. They are expressed in errors of length, area, direction, and curvature. These illusions are due to false perception of the patterns of lines. They occur because we attempt to reconcile parts of a figure to the whole figure or pattern, and thereby visually distort the part. *Contrast illusion* offers an example. The person standing between two tall people looks shorter than he is. We offer the following illustration. Study A and B below.

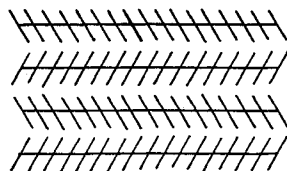


Is the dotted line longer in A than in B? Measure it. It appears longer in B only because of the contrast of the shorter continuous heavy lines.

There are theories which have been offered as an explanation of how we are confused in our visual perceptions. The first of these theories which we shall consider is called *eye movement*. It is generally assumed that the impression of length is gained by moving the eye along the object so as to follow from one end to the other. The vertical movement of the eye as it looks upward at a vertical line requires considerable effort. The vertical line will consequently seem *longer* than a horizontal line of equal length. Again, if the outward ends of a line attract the eye, that is, cause the movement to exceed the length of the unaltered line, the latter (A) will seem *longer* because the eye has included the ends with the center. Conversely, if the ends of the line turn inward, the movement of the eye is confined between the two inner extremes and the whole will seem shorter (B). Note the illustrations below.



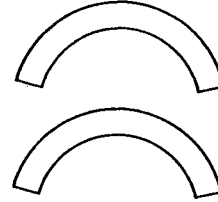
The illustrations under C show illusions caused by changing the direction of the oblique lines passing through horizontal ones. It will be noted that, although all the lines are horizontal, they seem to turn upward or bend downward.



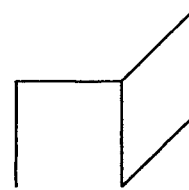
C

The lines of the arcs drawn below are identical in length, but it appears that the upper arc is smaller, because its shorter line

is immediately above the longer line of the lower arc.



Still another theory of illusion is known as the *perspective theory*. A line drawing suggests objects in three dimensions, length, breadth, and depth. Some lines may be of equal length but, if they are used in the drawing to *suggest* perspective, they may seem to be either longer or foreshortened. For example, study the illustration below. All lines are equal. The one suggesting depth, however, appears longer.



The *confusion theory*. It becomes very difficult to judge the lines and angles of a figure, because the observer is engrossed in the appearance of the figure as a whole. He looks upon the figure as a unit. He finds it difficult to rid himself of the total impression that carries over from an observation of the whole figure. These impressions which are brought over are *added* to the ones he has of the line which he imagines he is judging singly. Consequently, there is the illusion that the single line is longer than it actually is. This principle is illustrated below. The two dotted lines in Figures A and B are of the same length. It will be observed, however, that the dotted line in Figure B seems to be of greater length.



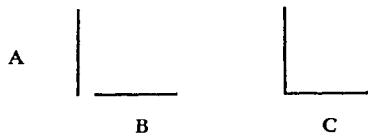
A

B

Habits, of course, contribute greatly to many illusions we experience. With continual reading, for example, we react to the stimulus of the *word patterns* instead of to single words. We read a whole line at a

time, not for its component words, but for its meaning. Consequently, a sentence may often have errors of spelling or other typographical mistakes which we do not see at all. The stimulus of the single word is lacking. A proofreader follows a different reading arrangement. He reads for words instead of ideas and yet it is difficult for him to break away entirely from the stimulus of patterns of thought. In other words, he sometimes continues to grasp whole sentences for their meaning and does not see misspelled words or errors in punctuation.

Another optical illusion is that known technically as *phi-phenomenon*. We know, of course, that motion pictures are not constantly in motion though they seem so to the eye. There are intervals of a fraction of a second when the motion picture screen is absolutely *black*. The projector throws on the screen a series of *still* photographs. These are interrupted by the shutter of the projector causing intervals of darkness. We are not conscious of the darkness, and the alternation between it and the still photographs causes the illusion that the pictures are *moving*. The consciousness retains for the fraction of a second the image that is held on the retina of the eye and then the picture is followed, after the dark interval, by another picture. They are so united in the mind as to create the illusion of constant motion. Tests of this phi-phenomenon or the illusion of motion have been made with the following illustration:



Illustrations A and B are flashed on and off rapidly on the screen. If there is a fairly long interval between the two flashes, as 150 milliseconds (thousandths of a second), lines A and B seem separated, as shown above. If the flashes are cut to 20 milliseconds, the lines seem to form a right angle; that is, lines A and B are united. If the interval is 60-90 milliseconds, then, to the sense of sight, A appears actually to *move* over to join B, as shown in Illustration C.

The olfactory sense is also subject to illusion. The examples to follow, however, are due to *suggestion* as well. Our suscepti-

bility to suggestion is principally dependent upon the faculty of imagination. An active imagination will combine simple ideas readily to form new and complex ones. The syncrasy of the imagination is not always voluntary. Often we do not realize what is occurring and the suggestion may, therefore, be quite misleading at times. For example, a test was made by having several persons smell, successively, three strong odors, namely, peppermint, wintergreen, and ethyl alcohol. Then the subjects were given ten bottles to smell, having been told that they had a delicate scent of two of the three odors. The subjects were requested to name the scents smelled. As a matter of fact, none of the bottles had any of the three odors. Yet the majority of the persons professed to have smelled one or more of them.

Illusions of the tactile sense are easily accomplished with the aid of suggestion. A subject's hands are placed in a bowl of liquid which contains electrodes. A current starts through the primary coil and then slowly the second coil is pulled up until the subject feels a very definite shock. Next the subject is told that he is going to be tested for his sensitivity to electric shock; that is, it is going to be determined how slight an electric current he will be able to feel. He is requested to immediately announce the slightest stimulus from the electrodes. At this time, unbeknown to the subject, the current is switched off from the primary coil. When the secondary coil is slowly pulled, the subject will exclaim that he feels the current which in reality does not exist.

Imagination is extremely useful in our living for it extends the possibilities of all that we perceive, by suggesting new forms into which it may be assembled. Without imagination, we would be bound strictly by the immediate qualities which things present to our senses. However, we must also realize that imagination, not directed by reason, becomes *fancy*, as has been well stated in our Rosicrucian monographs. It can, under such circumstances, become harmful because of the illusions which arise from it. Take your fountain pen and shake a drop of ink from it, so that it falls from the height of a few inches onto a white sheet of paper. As you look at the ink spot, its form will immediately suggest to your imagination several designs. It will seem to resemble many

different things. If you did not exercise reason, you might think that the ink spot is other than what it is. On the other hand, if, after several attempts, an ink spot does not suggest something to you by its design, your imagination is lacking and it follows that your creative ability is constricted. There is an old adage to the effect that there is none so blind as he who will not see. Seeing with the mind, however, is equally important as seeing with the eyes. Unless we exercise our inner perceptions and psychic faculties, as we are encouraged to do by our Rosicrucian teachings, our eyes and their fellow sense organs may lead us far astray in life.—X

(Reprinted during absence of the Imperator)

Can Projection be Wrongly Used?

Occasionally there comes to my attention correspondence from members who claim that they are being persecuted by means of *psychic projection*. This type of correspondence—and oral complaint—has become frequent enough for us to consider it in this FORUM.

The principles underlying the projection of the psychic consciousness or the consciousness of the inner self have been thoroughly illustrated in the monographs of the teachings. For this purpose, it will be sufficient to merely touch upon one or two of the basic principles of the phenomenon.

The human is a matrix of vibratory energy, vibrations of various frequencies and consisting of the two polarities, namely, positive and negative. As a whole, the vibratory energy of the body—the material nature of man—is predominantly negative. This is because the chemical elements of man's nature are composed of that spirit energy which underlies all matter. This spirit energy, or electronic energy, if you will, is both positive and negative in its polarity. However, in contrast to still another energy, it is predominantly negative. This other energy in man is the V.L.F. (Vital Life Force), which imbues every cell and is of the Universal Consciousness of the Cosmic. In comparison to the energy of matter, it is more infinite, less restricted and thus more positive in its polarity. The human aura is a combination of these two energies: the spirit energy of matter which is predominantly negative, and

the predominantly positive energy of the V.L.F. of the soul force.

Projection of consciousness is actually a projecting of the consciousness of the soul force within us, in accordance with some idea or concept which we may have. Let us use an analogy, to better understand this principle. An electric current flows from a generator through an electric lamp. The current in the lamp is always directly connected with its source, the generator. The current in the lamp manifests by heating the elements and becoming *light*. The light that radiates from the lamp we may liken to the ego, the self. The light is an attribute of the current and dependent upon it, and so also is the ego or psychic self, dependent upon the positive polarity or soul force which is in us.

Psychic projection, to use the analogy again, consists, then, of having the light of the lamp spread out farther and farther, either in one direction or in all directions, as we may desire. The projection of that light is really a projection of the manifestation of the electric current that is within it. Our ego, then, or self is our consciousness of the soul force within us; namely, the soul force within man manifests as the consciousness of self. When we project, we are extending that consciousness of self into space. Physically you may be situated in a room of your own home, but the self, the *you* is wherever the consciousness of self is, namely, wherever you realize yourself to be, which could be on the other side of the earth from where your body is situated. When you become engrossed, for analogy, in a motion picture, as we are told in our monographs, the self becomes closely identified with the characters in the story, or lost in the incidents of the play. You then have projected your self into the screen. You are no longer aware of where your physical body is.

Projection of consciousness can be either *passive* or *active*. If passive, we have become receptive to the incidents and circumstances of the place to which our psychic self is projecting. Thus, if I desire to project to a certain European city, with which I am familiar, and use the technique given in our monographs for the purpose, and if I am successful I would find myself, in *consciousness*, in that city. Under such circumstances, I will not appear there as a physical being, that is,

I will not see myself walking about as one would see his image in a dream. Rather, it would be as though I were looking out of a dark doorway upon a scene. My own image would not be visible, yet in consciousness I would be there and I would be able to perceive all that happened. I might have sentient experiences, that is, I might feel, see, hear, and smell what occurs at the locale. However, so long as I remain but an observer or spectator and do nothing more, mine would be *passive* projection. Conversely, if in projection we try to communicate with another, or to make ourselves visible in any form so that our presence can be realized, then we are *active* in our projection.

How is this phenomenon, which has been known by many different names such as bilocation, Epiphany, and empathy, accomplished? As said, the specific procedure to be followed by the member is related in the monographs. The basic principle is that the psychic self is of a positive polarity, since it is a manifestation of the Cosmic or Universal Soul force in man. Consequently, like the soul force, it has no restriction and it need not be *body-bound*. It can be projected anywhere, any time into the Cosmic. However, a malevolent thought, a thought associated with hate, jealousy, envy, et cetera, is negative, somatic, and earthly. If such thoughts, as purposes, are associated with the desire to project, then the psychic self or inner consciousness is not able to reach out into the Cosmic. It is blocked by an unsurmountable barrier. Thoughts which are destructive and malevolent are limited to the objective consciousness of the persons thinking them. No matter how strenuously such an individual tries to reach out with such thoughts and to project self with them, they go no further than a few feet in their influence. Such thoughts may be felt in the limited negative vibrations of the human aura. We have said that the negative vibrations of the human aura are of the material or earthly substance of the body. They are thus more limited and not able to radiate from the body more than a few feet. In the immediate presence of such a person, we may experience his acrimonious intents as a feeling of unrest on our part, or a feeling of repugnance toward him.

Furthermore, there is another factor which protects every human from the attempts of

others to project their psychic self for improper or immoral purposes, and this is the *conscience*. The conscience of an individual represents the highest moral idealism of which he is able to conceive. It arises from a perception of the Divine qualities of his own nature, and a defining of those qualities into terms of moral values. What we as individuals morally will not consciously subscribe to becomes a bulwark of protection against the vicious thoughts of others. Our conscience or moral precepts are firmly established in our subjective minds. They have become a law to the subjective, by our continual abiding by them and making of them a habit. Therefore, when we are asleep or in a so-called subjective state, these precepts are active and prevent a violation of our spiritual selves. They work by reflex, repelling any thought that may reach the inner consciousness and which is contra to them.

This is not merely a mystical dissertation or speculation. It has also been easily proven by numerous experiments in hypnosis, hypnosis conducted for psychological and therapeutic purposes. It is an established fact that a person who has been placed in a hypnotic state, and has voluntarily submitted his will and objective powers to those of the operator cannot be compelled to do anything which is in conflict with his moral sense. Such an individual, when in a hypnotic state, instead of being able to reason for himself and suggest to his own subjective mind, has the objective reason and will of the operator supplant his own functions. Consequently, the subject, the one in the hypnotic state, will obey every command or suggestion of the operator. The subjective mind obeys the command, as it is the function of the subjective to do so. However, whenever a command is issued by the operator, as a test, that the subject should resort to conduct or language which is contrary to his moral sense or conscience, the subject will be found not to respond. It means that the subjective mind has repelled the suggestion that the law established there as the result of habit is invoked. This law acts as a *guardian of the threshold* of the consciousness and actions of the individual. Persons in hypnotic states, as a matter of experimentation, have been asked to resort to obscenity and indecent acts, and the subject has always remained silent

and immobile. This indicates that such things were contrary to the normal moral sense and law of the subject.

In one of our monographs concerning projection, and in giving assurance to our members that others could not take possession of them by means of projection for any improper purposes, we say: "What in your waking state you would not permit, in a sense of decency, would not and could not be possible when you are asleep or in a subjective state, and at a time when the inner self stands guard." Then, again: "Your moral standards and your conduct which have become a habit put a wall of sanctity and safety around you which no projection can invade for improper purposes."

In spite of these age-old mystical principles, and in spite of the fact that they have been empirically proven by hypnosis, there are those persons who insist in tormenting themselves by the belief that they are being violated by the improper thoughts and acts of another while they sleep, and by means of psychic projection. They will insist that they have on occasion seen psychic personalities, with evil leers on their faces, enter the privacy of their bed chambers. They further relate that such *projected* personalities made improper advances toward them, or other acts which terrified them. Were such experiences actual exceptions to the Cosmic principles? The answer is *no*. Investigation of such cases has invariably revealed that a series of events have led up to such delusions.

Usually the person has had some previous shock or terrifying experience in connection with the personality, which he later imagines is projecting to him for improper purposes. The shock of the objective experience causes a *phobia*, a fixation in the subjective mind. Subsequently the individual broods over the experience and such brooding enlarges it in his mind, and finally he comes to dwell upon this fixation almost every conscious hour. Little illnesses, minor misfortunes, or minor unfavorable incidents he begins to attribute to the "influence" of that personality. The realization of the personality becomes greater and greater within the subjective mind where the phobia has been established. Eventually the person actually imagines the physical presence of the personality at all hours. To put it more simply, the impressions of the personality

from within, the result of the illusion, are such intense sensations that the individual is unable to distinguish between them and reality, that is, the things he sees or hears objectively. It reaches the unfortunate stage where the victim's reactions to his phobia are actually confused with normal objective experiences. The unfortunate person is sure he has actually seen or heard in his presence the person whom he fears, endeavoring to inflict harm upon him psychically.

Such a victim of this fear may actually have known, by previous study, that Cosmically such projections are impossible, yet, because of his phobia, the experiences as built up within his subjective have become so real that he can no longer deny them, any more than he can deny that he sees some object outside of his window. The only solution is to try to remove the phobia, to go behind the cause and extirpate it from the subconscious mind. This has often been done effectively through medical hypnosis, by a trained psychologist or psychiatrist. The procedure is a simple one. The patient is put (voluntarily, of course) into a hypnotic sleep. Then a counter suggestion opposing the nature of the phobia is implanted in the subjective mind, by repeating it numerous times. It becomes a law just as it would if it had been suggested by the objective mind of the patient to himself. The counter suggestion is, of course, associated with the phobia as a *related* idea. The subject does not objectively know what has been said to him while he was in the hypnotic state. In the post-hypnotic state—namely, when he is again normal, and while going about his affairs—if the phobia thereafter again begins to take possession of him, by association the counter idea arises simultaneously and ameliorates it. In this way, the efficacy of the phobia is gradually diminished to a point where the patient is able to compose himself, his will is strengthened, and he is thereafter able to discipline his own mind.—X

(Reprinted during absence of the Imperator)

Do Memory and Imagination Have Actuality?

It is a conclusion in Rosicrucian philosophy that "now" is the most important period of anyone's existence. In previous articles in the *Rosicrucian Forum*, in the Rosicrucian monographs, and in other writings, this prin-

ciple has been reiterated from time to time in different ways. We know that the past is gone and cannot be recovered; we know that the future is still to come, so consequently "now"—the present moment—is the time of life with which we have to deal and the time that we should utilize to the best possible advantage. In other parts of the Rosicrucian teachings and of this magazine, this subject has and will be discussed in more detail. The subject of this article concerns a question regarding how one can classify certain mental functions as to whether or not they exist in actuality or only in imagination.

If the past is gone, exactly what is the value of memory to the average individual? Does imagination—which takes us into the future—have any practical use? These questions concern the personal psychological response of each individual to his concept of time. We each have to deal with the circumstances of our own lives and environments, and we are constantly reflecting environment within ourselves, within our mental outlook, and in our behavior, but in addition to environment, there is the complex nature of our mental self. Mentally we are made up of sensations, emotions, memories, reason, imagination, and various other manifestations of consciousness that have been catalogued in these various psychological terms.

We relive the past in memory. We often can reproduce to a degree certain pleasurable sensations from remembering pleasant events that have taken place in the past or from bringing to consciousness the memory of certain pleasant incidents that it has been our experience to participate in at some past time. Also, we constantly draw upon memory in order to bring to mind knowledge which we either have learned or experienced in the past. The ability to call on memory is the only means that we have to utilize past experience and past learning. It is not to be inferred that since the past has already gone and the "now" is of the most importance to us, that the past should be entirely ignored. Man has been given the ability to remember, has been given the potential of memory, in order that he will be able to draw upon the existence that he has already lived and will not have to repeat every experience in order that his knowledge and application will be at its best.

If we had no memory, then every situation we faced would be an entirely new experience necessitating our having to start at the beginning every time we began anything and resulting in our being completely buried in detail. We would never accomplish anything. The human race would not be creative. We would not have the civilization that now exists; in fact, there would never have been any civilization in man's whole history. Therefore, memory is a definite tool, a means of helping us orient our inner selves to the environment in which we are placed.

Utilizing memory does not mean we have to worry about the past. Man has the same selective ability with the use of memory that he has with the use of his sense faculties. We can see a number of things, but we do not have to concentrate upon all we see at one time; we are able to choose those things upon which we want to concentrate or the item to which we want to give our attention at any particular moment. The ability to discriminate and select is a part of the mental power of human consciousness. Therefore, the use of memory in its constructive purposes is to bring from memory to the level of consciousness those things toward which we wish to give attention at any particular moment, and in this process be able to draw upon the knowledge and experience that has preceded the present moment.

Looking into the future is a somewhat different situation. We can predict to a degree what the future will be, provided we have interpreted all the facts correctly and that certain events take place in the order we expect them. We can reasonably presume that if we see a vehicle moving at a certain rate of speed and coming toward us that it will arrive at the same position where we are at the moment. That is, we predict the future in terms of memory, in terms of our past experience; however, it is absolutely true that we cannot predict all future events specifically and definitely, since we do not know what all the circumstances are or will be. We do not know how we will behave, or how other human beings will behave, or what certain apparatus or machinery will do; therefore, the prediction of the future is very indefinite and cannot be relied upon with the same assurance that we can rely upon knowledge and experience that has oc-

curred in the past and has been brought to the level of consciousness again through memory.

In spite of these limitations, the use of imagination for constructive, creative purposes is a worth-while project. It is in that way that we prepare ourselves for certain circumstances. We lay aside money to meet an obligation that may occur in the future. Such an action is that of a prudent individual and a good example of common sense, but to believe that the world is going to come to an end on a certain date in the future, or that some catastrophe is going to overtake us, or that some fortune is going to become ours, is to merely give full rein to our imagination. When we let imagination carry us to the point where our ideals, hopes, and whims occupy our minds to the exclusion of proper consideration of the actualities we must face, then we are not properly directing the constructive means of using imagination.

Both memory and imagination serve definite purposes, but if an individual lives in the past or in the future to the point of ignoring the present, then he is misusing these faculties. The present is the period of time that has actual existence. The actualities of the physical world, of our mental existence, and of our relation between the external world and our inner selves are something of which we can be conscious only at this particular time. Everything else, in terms of memory or imagination, is merely a mental concept which we are bringing to the level of consciousness as a thought that can be given attention at a definite moment.

Memory, for example, has actuality only through the means by which we can bring that memory into conscious realization. In other words, if I think of what I did yesterday, the things that existed in my environment yesterday do not have the actuality that they had when the actual incident was taking place. This is difficult to describe. At the moment, I am sitting and dictating this article on a mechanical dictating apparatus; I see wheels moving and lights flashing; I see the desk upon which it is placed; I see everything about me which constitutes the physical environment of my office. They all have actuality of the moment; they exist and are being used by me. Tomorrow, if I happen to think of this moment and recall the incident of dictating

this particular article, the period of actuality will have passed, and only a mental impression which we call *memory* will exist.

The conditions and events of this present time will not exist in the same relationship to each other and to me in the future as they do at this moment when I am actually in the process of doing this particular piece of work. However, if tomorrow I have occasion to refer to the contents of this article, I will remember some of the words I said, and I can review what I said by referring to what was written from the transcription which I dictated, and then the article itself will have actuality. It will be an existent thing, brought into being through the various mechanical functions of the dictating machine, the work of the stenographer, the typewriter, the paper—all these things will have caused this particular discourse to come into physical manifestation.

There is no harm to the individual in using his memory and imagination as freely as it is possible. The harm lies in assigning actuality to memory and imagination. If an individual devotes all his time to recalling incidents of the past and reliving as it were in his own mind the things that occurred yesterday, a year ago, or ten years ago, or if, as the other extreme, he daydreams constantly about what he would like to have happen tomorrow or a year from tomorrow, then he is going outside the world of actuality. Such an individual is functioning to escape the realities of his present existence, by trying to find refuge or trying to hide in the conditions that existed at some time in the past or that he hopes will exist in the future.

Memory and imagination, therefore, have actuality only in so far as they can be applied to the present moment either constructively or for the pleasure of recalling the incidents. They do not have actuality in themselves; and, if an individual takes refuge in thoughts which existed in the past or those which he hopes will exist in the future and if he is unable to discriminate between those thoughts of the past or future and his current thinking of the moment, then such an individual is passing up the most important time of life and is building a basis for an abnormal existence due to his ignoring the actualities of the present.

By all means, we should draw upon every faculty of the mind that is possible for us. We should utilize every potentiality, every God-given ability which is within us, but never should we try to substitute any mental function for the obligations that are ours at the moment. We must not attempt to escape by living entirely in memory or by living entirely in an imaginary world that may or may not exist in the future. *Now* is the time to utilize all our potentialities, and we should draw upon all of them for immediate application. The actualities of the moment are those which we can utilize; and then in our own realization, we can come to the conclusion that will help build up our character, our spiritual abilities, our general involvement in the process of soul-personality growth through this incarnation.—A

Trial and Tribulation

It is not unusual for the question to be asked, "Is life a series of trials, tribulations, problems, and suffering?" Many people would answer this in the affirmative. Many philosophies are based upon the fact, or at least the accepted fact, that all life is a problem, all life is suffering. While this idea has been put into various philosophies and has been considered by many thinkers throughout the history of man's thought, it has probably been best expressed by the Stoics in ancient Greece. They gradually developed their philosophy upon the principle that there was nothing to be obtained by living except to bridge the existence of time, that all was simply a process of accepting that which comes, and that life had more suffering and trouble than it had pleasure. Philosophies expressing the opposite point of view have also been developed.

The Stoic philosophy was adapted to early Christian theology, and, even today, we find expressed in many forms of Christian doctrine the principle that man is born primarily to suffer. His life will be primarily a series of trials and tribulations—a process through which he must live, a cross to be borne. In commenting upon this viewpoint, a frater who has been a member of the Rosicrucian Order for many years and is also the minister of a large Midwestern church made this statement: "The philosophy of Christian faith and the philosophy of mysticism

as we know it in our Order is very serious and must be learned and applied to human life through trial and tribulation." There is no doubt that the philosophy of this minister is greatly influenced by Christian doctrine and principle, but he is also stressing the fact that the basic philosophy as taught in the Rosicrucian Order—that is, the mystical concept which is the nucleus of our thinking and the most important function of Rosicrucian doctrine—too is a very serious matter that must be learned and applied to each individual human existence through certain forms of trial and tribulation.

It should be obvious to any intelligent person that life is not a simple, pleasure-seeking process that will always bring satisfaction. He who will try to make out of life nothing more than a means of obtaining satisfaction of the physical senses is only confusing the issue and bringing himself to a point where he will, in the end, gain nothing. The continuous attempt to satisfy the physical desire for pleasure and what is believed to be the resultant happiness does not produce that which is hoped for by the individual striving in that direction. No material thing can produce continued pleasure over a period of time regardless of how much we think we would like to possess this or that thing. We know, if we are intelligent, that the pleasure-producing quality inherent within the thing—within any material thing—is limited, and we will eventually tire of any material possession which we have.

That life consists of many trials, many tribulations, a certain amount of suffering, mental and physical, is a fact which we should face and not try to avoid. These tests and trials will come to us as long as we are physical, existent beings. We cannot avoid them; there will be a certain number of them. It is a mere statement of the process of the alchemy of life. In everything in which we find change—and after all, in an honest and final analysis everything does change—we find that change takes place through an upheaval or at times through radical procedures and manifestations in things that are existent. Take the simple process of the preparation of food, that is, the process of cooking. The dough which becomes bread goes through the process of being changed under heat. In other words, fire is the element which produces heat that

in turn makes a radical change in the uncooked substance causing it to become the food that eventually serves us. Thus change has added to food's tastefulness and usefulness in so far as the body is better able to assimilate more things cooked than uncooked.

Fire, therefore, is a powerful force to break down existent things and cause them to manifest in another way. It actually changes their chemical structure, changes the composition; for example, the bread that we eat is much different from the dough that was placed in the pan and then placed in the oven where heat could affect it. Fire is the force which causes the transmutation to set in, that brings about the product which we can utilize and find satisfactory.

Trial and tribulation are the fire of life, the elements which enter into our experience and cause an otherwise routine living to have meaning, to have something come out of our experience. This force within life may not always be comfortable. It may be very trying, but without it, nothing can be achieved. Sacrifice and suffering are some of the steps that the individual must take in the process of evolution, and, whether that evolution is mental or physical, evolvment must be experienced.

The individual who first is fitted with glasses in order to see better finds that a period of adjustment is necessary before he can gain the full benefit that comes from these physical aids to sight. Every new thing that we have to assume as a part of our daily habits requires certain uncomfortable adjustment, but out of that adjustment, out of that transmutation, out of the discomfort or even suffering that may be entailed, will usually come a degree of satisfaction which could not have been attained without having gone through this transmutation process. We could never gain some of the things that we have, even in our physical experiences, if we did not make the effort and sacrifice to gain them.

It may be painful to do certain work, to carry out certain functions, but the same work or function is the key to what we are trying to gain; therefore, attainment is worth the price. It is the goal toward which we can strive, toward which we can direct our effort, and the intelligent individual will realize that not all will be pleasant or easy.

As we can attain control or at least use of physical things, we can also realize that many of the problems of life are solved through the experience that is ours and the trials and tribulations that are a part of our life process. We are aiming toward an end when perfection will be the end product of evolution and when that state of perfection comes, there will be no more trials or tribulations. Those lessons will be learned, and man's effort and his consciousness can be directed toward realization through direct awareness of God.—A

Degrees in Rosicrucian Teachings

It is not uncommon for a member of AMORC to ask how many degrees there are in the Rosicrucian teachings, and why we have degrees. To know how many degrees constitute the total of the Rosicrucian teachings is not as important as how well the content of each degree is grasped by the individual student. Basically, there are nine degrees in the Rosicrucian studies. These are called the Temple Degrees and they constitute a survey of the principles that underlie the Rosicrucian philosophy and its application to the individual life. Preceding these nine Temple Degrees there are three introductory degrees known as Neophyte Degrees. Then, after the ninth degree, there are other degrees through which the member may pass after a satisfactory completion of the nine degrees of the basic Rosicrucian teachings.

The degrees are not honorary degrees. They are steps of progress. It is convenient that the principles that are taught in the Rosicrucian teachings be divided into certain patterns and these individual patterns that constitute the degree are approached from three points of view; the emotional, the practical, and the intellectual. It is through the ritual, and the initiation, that the emotional approach is made. The individual is able to participate in these ritualistic activities which appeal to the dramatic sense that is inherent within us and which gives the emotional overtone that is so essential toward grasping those principles that can be incorporated into our consciousness and made a part of our life. Mere facts are not enough, the emotions also must be appealed to and they must respond if we are to gain the

benefits and the advantages that come through a study of this kind.

From a practical standpoint, each degree presents those applications which make it possible for the individual to utilize the ideas presented. This is done through the experiments and exercises that become a part of the course of study.

From an intellectual standpoint, certain facts, principles, and ideas are given for the benefit of increasing the individual's knowledge in general information as well as presenting the new points of view.

So psychically, intellectually, and practically, the Rosicrucian teachings are designed to appeal to the individual and, when applied, result in a properly balanced life philosophy and outlook.—A

The Use of Inspiration

A question recently submitted to the *Rosicrucian Forum* asks: "Is there any way an individual can judge whether the inspiration and intuitional knowledge which he may receive is primarily for his own development and enlightenment, or is meant to be given to others in some form such as poetry, prose, music, art, or some other expression?" It would appear, judging from mail received by the Grand Lodge, that this problem comes under consideration oftener than would seem likely.

Many individuals are confused when they become conscious of their intuitional urges or feel that they are inspired in a manner that makes new knowledge ever present in their consciousness. One purpose of the Rosicrucian teachings is to help develop the individual in his ability to learn more through intuition than he has been able to do in his previous experiences. Being ever dependent upon the physical senses, man has lacked intuitional development. To grow in the use of intuition, man must develop new habits, new techniques, and in that way gain the inspiration which comes through the process of attunement and concentration which is taught as a fundamental part of the Rosicrucian teachings.

Intuitional knowledge includes impressions that enter consciousness in different ways. First of all, there is direct intuition, that is, knowledge that comes into consciousness and yet seems to have no external

source in so far as the physical or material world is concerned. The individual in such a circumstance receives what is popularly called a "hunch." This may be entirely inconsistent with reason and seemingly unrelated to the experience of the individual; that is, it is something to which he has previously not given any particular attention or tried to develop. Intuition is sometimes a series of ideas or a single concept that has suddenly become apparent in consciousness. Under such circumstances, there is no immediate explanation of the source. This is truly an inspirational concept, one that has come into consciousness complete and needing no further change or analysis. It is, of course, necessary in the earliest attempts to gain inspirational knowledge or to develop the use of the intuition to be able to distinguish between pure imagination and intuition. It is not infrequent that the beginning student confuses his own imagination with what might be actual intuition.

Conscientiously, the individual must analyze and attempt to determine whether his imagination has been given free rein and he has permitted it to build up within his own mind such ideas as he would prefer to have, or whether the ideas are completely new, or at least new to his experience. Sometimes the element of time alone will be the key by which it is possible to decide whether one's impression is merely the result of the free play of imagination. No one can determine this for another. It is something that comes through experience, and it is important for the individual member to review from time to time those concepts presented in his first lectures in order that he may gain the proper experience and technique which go into the building of the intuitive ability. As the intuitive ability increases through use, the ability to recognize that which is of intuitive origin is also increased.

The second matter that has to do with the recognition of intuitive knowledge comes from the sharpening of our general ability to utilize things we already know. For example, it is possible that an intuitive impression may relate things that have previously been unrelated in consciousness. After all, we must never lose sight of the fact, and this has been repeated frequently in our literature, that we are physically existent beings; we are human beings; we are

limited to the scope of the physical human body, and we have to live in it and live with it. If it were not our lot to have that experience, we would not be here. Consequently, although the five physical senses are pointed out repeatedly in our teachings as being of secondary importance to the ability of gaining inspiration and intuitional knowledge, they are nevertheless important factors in our lives. We will have to continue to depend upon them for much knowledge and for much of the experience that comes into consciousness.

What we see, feel, hear, taste, and smell, is important in our daily lives. The senses are the means by which we assimilate the knowledge that is a part of our environment. The fact that we live in the physical body indicates that we must participate and be a part of the environment in which we are living. We have to absorb certain knowledge and information from that environment. Environment provides circumstances in which we develop; that is, the soul is resident within a body which is in turn resident within an environment in which both must grow. There is no use denying that a certain development has to take place within the limitations of those circumstances.

The body is physical, and to familiarize ourselves with the physical part of the environment in which the body is placed, we have the five physical senses. Even if it were possible for us to develop the intuitive ability to the point where all knowledge, all information, all experience, might come through that channel, we would still be physical entities in a physical body dependent upon physical impressions for a certain part of our life's existence. Therefore, we should not depreciate the physical senses nor should we depreciate the knowledge which comes into consciousness through those senses; we should develop the point of view, the mental broadness, sufficiently to be able to appraise properly those sensations and impressions that enter into our physical being. By being able to look at the whole matter with proper perspective, we see ourselves as conscious beings in a physical environment; but at the same time, we are a part of the nonphysical—we are body and soul.

The soul, after all, is the seat of the inner self, but it is through its existence today

that our consciousness of it can develop. Therefore, intuition helps us to put together the various phases of our physical environment and to create the mental images in our mind as a result of physical experience. What we see today becomes a part of us. Concepts become implanted in consciousness and what we see tomorrow may apparently have no relationship to what has been seen, but a relationship may become apparent through an intuitive impression that makes it possible for us to relate seemingly unrelated facts.

If you can remember those high school days when you first studied algebra, you probably realized little relationship between that rather abstract mathematical science and anything in practical everyday life. But those who have much to do with mathematics in the course of their daily activities learn that algebra is an exact science which has to be used frequently in coming to the understanding of certain conditions or facts with which they work. In other words, we learned the science as an abstract entity; it was through experience in the world of making a living that certain individuals learned to correlate certain facts with the actual experience of living.

To refer again to the question asked at the beginning of these comments, as to whether or not that which an individual receives in an intuitional way is to be stored up inside him as a selfish possession or whether it is to be shared with other people, is a point that must be answered on the basis of each individual experience, not on the basis of a general, all-over statement. First of all, we must ask ourselves, "Is the impression truly an intuitional impression or is it merely a new association of ideas?" If we are convinced that we have received certain knowledge by intuition, then we should by all means feel obligated to know what we are to do with that knowledge. It may be that it has a very personal meaning and, if that is true, we will probably grasp in a period of time what that personal meaning is. No one else can explain personal meanings to us. We have to gradually fit such knowledge into our thinking and have it in the back of our mind so that it may be recalled the first time it seems to apply to a situation or to a series of events.

Much knowledge that we gain in life does not have immediate utilization. Already I have referred to the example of algebra; the average high school student sees no utilization of that science, but there is a possibility that at some time in life, an opportunity for application will come. He will then draw what is needed from his memory to direct himself in finding how to utilize that knowledge to which he had been exposed some years before.

Many intuitive impressions seem to lie dormant in consciousness until they are called upon for use. We may not see their immediate application, but at some test, or some trial, or some circumstance, we suddenly remember that we had an impression that would help us in interpreting the situation or in making a matter plain.

The second point in regard to these impressions is to determine whether or not they are impersonal. We might say that most intuitive impressions do have a personal overtone to them. We mean that they are necessary to the realization within our consciousness of our own life's work and function. As we become more and more attuned through concentration and meditation to the reception of intuitive impressions, we become more and more aware of how much we are dependent upon them in rounding out our life's experience. "Man cannot live on bread alone" also means that man cannot live alone upon the analysis and rational thinking that comes as a result of impressions received through the physical senses. The full, rounded life is that which draws upon all the faculties of our being, including the intuitional urges that come into consciousness through the subjective mind. That each of these impressions has certain personal overtones does not mean that they are restricted to personal use however.

Man's obligation is not only his own evolution, but to contribute as best he can to the evolution of those around him. Although we may not always literally accept the principle that we are our brother's keeper, we are to a degree responsible not only for our own Karma but for the Karma of those who constitute a part of our environment and, in reverse, we are a part of theirs; therefore, expression is an important part of living.

Expression means the putting into some kind of active form the things which constitute the innermost part of our consciousness. The artist, whether he is a writer, a painter, musician, mason, carpenter, or whether he belongs to any trade or craft, is the individual who takes pride in bringing into existence a new creation in the sense that this piece of work is done with thorough conscientiousness and consideration for its ultimate attainment of perfection in so far as it is possible for the human being to perfect a thing. If an individual feels the urge to express those things which have come intuitively and which are not in violation of his own personal experience or personal development, he should by all means put them into poetry, prose, music, art, or any other form. Everybody should feel free to "let himself go," as it were, now and then, in expressing those things which indicate that they may bring value to someone else as well as pleasure to himself through the very process of expression.

This does not mean that everybody can be a poet, a writer, a musician, or can start painting pictures. Remember that we have to do certain things ourselves. We cannot write articles or stories regardless of our inspiration unless we know language and something about how to use that language. We cannot paint if we do not know which end of the paintbrush is to be placed against the canvas; we cannot compose music if we do not know some of the elementary principles of a musical instrument and how music is recorded on a scale. It is foolish, in fact it is silly, for anyone to feel that he is inspired to write poetry, or write articles, or compose music, when he has never had any instruction or any experience in any of those fields.

The Cosmic may wish you to express yourself through the medium of writing, but it will expect you to learn all there is to know about how to write so that your expression will have freedom and will mature in the physical medium in which you have tried to gain some element of knowledge. Therefore, we might summarize the answer to our question thus: by all means, express your inspirational and intuitive urges to other people through the mediums that you find best for your expression and in which you have trained yourself to give expression.—A



The **DEVIL'S WORKSHOP**

BEHIND barred doors, in ill-lighted, musty garrets, gathered the monsters. Monsters they were said to be, who with strange rites and powers conjured the devil's miracles. It was whispered that one who approached stealthily their place of hiding could smell the sulphur fumes of Hades. He who dared place his eye to a knot-hole could see these agents of the devil at their diabolical work with strange powders and liquids, producing weird changes in God's metals. Who were these beings? They were the alchemists of the Middle Ages, the fathers of our modern chemistry and pharmacy. They worked and struggled to wrest from nature her secrets for the benefit of mankind. Misunderstood, the masses accused them of witchcraft, threatened their lives and compelled them to conceal themselves in a mysterious manner and veil their astounding formulas and truths in mystical terms.

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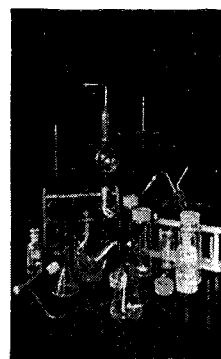
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An Apothegm by Thales

Of all things that are,
the most ancient is God,
for He is uncreated.

The most beautiful is the universe,
for it is God's workmanship.

The greatest is space,
for it holds all things.

The swiftest is mind,
for it speeds everywhere.

The strongest, necessity,
for it masters all.

The wisest, time,
for it brings everything to light.

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Greetings!



THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

Dear Fratres and Sorores:

"Great oaks from little acorns grow." The culture and magnanimity, or the depravity and viciousness of nations are the outgrowth of the individual habits and the characters of their citizens. Collectively, a people will often give lip service to certain ideals, but, as individuals, they will act to the contrary. Therefore, the probability of a nation becoming a great benefactor to humanity in other than material creations must be determined from the conduct of its average citizen.

Watch the throngs on the main thoroughfares of great cities. They rush on their way, jostling each other rudely. Frequently, they fail to even mumble the stereotyped "Excuse me," or "Pardon me." Sometimes they turn about and glare reproachfully at the person into whom they had collided, whether he was responsible or not. In queues formed before shops or places of amusement, individuals will force their way inconsiderately, ahead of others, so as to be served first. Again, innumerable automobile drivers, when not watched by police, will not check their speed when pedestrians with the right-of-way cross their path. These are but a few indications of the lack of restraint of the instinctive urges in people.

Man is very much an animal. He has all the fundamental appetites and desires of the lower animals. He cannot completely quell them without becoming subnormal or abnormal. The only distinctive faculty of man is his *reason*. The reason can, and should, establish certain ideals, certain intellectual and emotional ends, which become competitive with the primitive urges. An animal, such as the dog, cannot have intellectual desires. He cannot strive to know about the heavens above him. He cannot love to inquire into the nature of his own conduct. Aside from the appetites and the intellectual desires, man also has what we may call the *psychic urges*. They constitute, for example, compassion, sympathy, the desire for tran-

quillity, the love of justice and the love of righteousness. These stimuli, or urges, are quite subtle. It is often difficult for these finer impulses of man's nature to make themselves felt in his consciousness. It is only when he is relaxed, when the grosser passions and appetites are subdued, that he may experience them. At such a time these immanent feelings are transformed by the mind into ideas, into things which seem to represent them. Consequently, we interpret certain acts, or kinds of conduct, as being in accord with justice, sympathy, and righteousness. The extent of our defining of these feelings is dependent upon our intelligence, experience, and education.

Man is by nature, gregarious; he desires to live in groups of his own kind, to form what he calls *society*. Many of the lower animals, likewise, prefer to live in groups, packs or herds. The psychic urges of man have caused his mind, his intellect, to confer upon society a distinctive meaning. Each of us who enjoy human society can, to the extent of our ability to express ourselves, give some reason why we like and wish to live with other humans. These reasons must conform to the psychic urges of our own being, to compassion, justice, and righteousness. If they do not, then we are not living like human beings. We are being driven blindly by the elemental aspects of our nature, to live as if in a herd. It is quite simple: either society becomes a pack of animals who instinctively function together merely to accomplish something to satisfy their physical requirements as individuals, or it has knowingly united to accomplish something for its *collective* good.

The individual who is inconsiderate, abusive and selfish in the narrowest sense of the word, in his relations with others, is *anti-social*. He may live in a community with other persons; he may indulge in the advantages which collective living provides, but he is nevertheless, *anti-social*. He is not contributing to the social ideal prompted by

the psychic urges. He is merely conforming to the herd instinct. Wolves care nothing for the pack as a whole. They will collectively seize their prey when hunting in packs, but they will proceed to destroy their own pack by ferocious fighting among themselves.

The highest aim of human society is to *give*, to *create*, to *do*; the lowest aim of society is the effect of the herd instinct—using society only for the immediate benefit of the individual. The psychic urges cause man to realize that the highest social aim cannot be satisfied through individual efforts. The creation of the beautiful, the development of a harmonious atmosphere which is appealing to the higher self, can never be a single enterprise. No artist wants to paint entirely for himself. His greatest joy is in the radiation of his aesthetic talents. He wishes others to see and enjoy the symmetry of line, or harmony of sound and color which he has executed. An artist's greatest personal happiness is in the realization that others also find enjoyment in his works.

The truly socially minded person is, therefore, one who displays a *courteous* attitude. By his conduct he is binding society together with the bonds of personal self-restraint so that it may be kept intact for higher purposes.

Ordinarily, when we explain courtesy, we do so in terms of ethics. This consists of a reciting of the generally accepted rules of conduct. However, a comparison of the customary ethics of various nations will show quite a disparity between them. The courtesy necessary to advance society, to make it serve the exalted aspect of man's nature, must go deeper than just the rules of conduct! It must go back to the *causes* of conduct. It must consist of those causes that can be made applicable to all human relations and changing conditions. The reason why one people will do something offensive to another, without compunction, is that their ethics are not founded upon the same premises of courtesy.

How shall this essential courtesy be determined? In all human enterprise, the individual must be the starting point of consideration. The self is a composite. It is the aggregate of the body with its physical urges, and the mind and soul, or psychic nature, with their respective attributes. We proceed

by asking ourselves, What does our personal *self* want from life?

Our most insistent needs are the organic ones. We dislike the sensations of pain as the result of hunger, thirst, cold, and disease. Physical imperturbability or freedom from physical want or distraction, is thus a first essential. We say they are "first" because these distractions are so easily incurred. The normal human being is not satisfied, however, when only his physical needs are gratified, or when his body is at ease. We have the faculty of becoming self-conscious. We can observe, reflect upon the operation of our own minds. We can think, reason, recollect, imagine. Even when the body is passive, the mind may be very active. The mind is capable of mental desires—ends which it wants to achieve. These mental desires become stimuli, cravings which are often far stronger than the prosaic appetites. What person with creative ability has not been tormented by the desire to experiment with, or to build some device, or has not wanted to satisfy his curiosity about the nature of something?

Life, then, obviously, if it is to provide tranquillity, must gratify these mental desires as well. Fortunately for humanity, there have been many humanitarians in the world. They have brought pleasure to their higher selves by alleviating the suffering of others and by correcting obvious social ills. This inclination to altruism and humanitarianism, is also a psychic or mental urge. If we have these innate inclinations, then the opportunity to gratify them is also what we want from life.

Since these elements, the desires of our composite self, are so basic, it is comparatively simple to set up certain rules to recognize them. Rules including them become the positive requirements of a system of ethics established for any people, regardless of race or nationality. You believe them as being indubitably necessary to any society of which you become a member, or a citizen. Fundamentally, courtesy is not complete until you have conceded to other members of society the same right to these positive requirements as you have. However, this is more than a mere expression of "others may do as I do." The unthoughtful pursuit of your positive requirements and others doing likewise may bring conflict. It would result in each in-

dividual acting entirely for himself and destroying society, as often has happened. Consequently, each of us must set up a negative course of action in our lives as well as a positive one.

The purpose of the negative course of action is to prevent our positive acts from interfering with those very rights which we concede to others. The only way this is made possible is by assigning *order* to human relations. This *order* becomes a product of the human intellect. The order consists of an established sequence for the demands and rights of individuals. In other words, the order of human relations shall be founded upon provisions of time and space. Let us further elucidate. Suppose I have a positive requirement—a basic need which is necessary to my being, such as we have explained; you have a positive requirement, as well. The means of fulfillment of that requirement may not be sufficient for both of us at the moment. Which one shall have it? This shall be determined by the time provision, that is, the person who made known his requirement first; or perhaps the spatial provision shall apply—that is, the one who is more adjacent to the supply shall obtain it. The human mind abhors confusion, and seeks order. Order is, psychologically, any arrangement which the mind can readily comprehend. The confusions that result in discourtesy, rudeness, and in a display of the primitive aggression of animals, can be avoided by this application of order to our relations with others.

This application of order to our wants or our desires, does not dispose of the spirit of competition which makes for progress. Each of us may try to be the first to the source of supply, or means of satisfaction. Yet we can recognize the position of another in point of time as preceding us. If one precedes us in time, or in sequence, we will recognize that order.

This sense of order in human relations is expressed even in the so-called “social graces.” We will not rudely interrupt another who is speaking, no matter what we wish to say, until he has finished speaking. We will recognize the fact that he precedes us. Without a regulation of the sequence of speech, we know that confusion would arise. Again, where several of us need something, and none of us has preference in point

of time or in sequence, then the principle of *equality* shall apply. Since, in our original reasoning we have conceded to others the right to the same positive requirements as we have, then they must share equally with us, if the principle of order has not worked against them. Under such conditions there must be a division, an equitable sharing of the advantages to be obtained.

If all of us will use these psychological factors of *order and equality* in governing our behavior, a higher code of ethics will ensue. This improvement would reflect itself in the broader aspect of human relations, namely, international affairs. Without compliance with such principles, we have nothing more than a society of individuals living together, but in practice, working against each other.

Faternally,

RALPH M. LEWIS,

Imperator

(Reprinted during absence of the Imperator)

Does Luck Exist?

A frater in the United States Army, now stationed in Italy, joins our FORUM CIRCLE. He arises to ask: “Is there such a thing as luck? Why do we sometimes continually win in a game while other persons lose, no matter how hard they may try? Also, why is it that some days it seems that everything is against us; for instance, if you are waiting in line for something to be issued, you get the worst, while everyone else gets the best, and so throughout the entire day—or life. I am a member overseas in Italy and seem to be going around puzzled about the world, with many questions on my mind all of the time. This is the first opportunity I have had to submit a question to the FORUM. For my benefit and, of course, to help the FORUM, I will send in others from now on.”

The word *luck* is used ordinarily in the sense of one of two meanings. It is used either in the sense of *good fortune* or *chance*. Between the two uses, however, there lies a vast difference of meaning. Fortune is either created for us or we do our own creating of it. Those who assume that our fortune lies entirely out of our power and the circumstances of environment are fatalists. Such individuals presume that external powers or entities may arbitrarily favor an individual or affect him detrimentally. This

influence may, in the opinion of some, be ordained in advance of birth, as a prescribed course of living, which is inescapable. Again, others accept it as a fate which is decreed from day to day, or hour to hour. The unthinking and overzealous devotee of astrology is often one of the latter type. He is apt to believe that every favorable incident or unfavorable one is the direct result of an influence upon him from the stars. Luck to him means a fatalistic control of the affairs of his life, regardless of the exercise of his will, or the use of his own powers to create his destiny.

Some students of mysticism have the same attitude toward *karma* or the Cosmic doctrine of Cosmic compensation. They presume that conduct in a previous life has absolutely determined the course of events for this one. Consequently, they are of the opinion that whatever happens to them is karmic, in the sense of being the effect of a cause having occurred in a previous existence. They ignore entirely the minor causes of their *present* living. Such causes may be the accumulated impetus of numerous current acts on their part producing their present plight or advantage. Such, again, is fatalism, and results in a suppression of the individual will and a submitting to circumstances. Let us outrightly deny the existence of a fate which predetermines and fixes the course of human lives and events.

Causes may result in certain effects emphatically following, provided that the causes are not countered or mitigated. The cause, however, carries with it no power that prevents it from being altered by still other more potent causes. For analogy, a ball thrown with a certain velocity will carry a number of feet in one direction, *unless* it is intercepted by a bat, then it will reverse its course and go in the opposite direction. Consequently, the only thing which may make inflexible the course of human life is a submission on our part to all causes. If we close our mind and submit our will, then we are like a straw in the wind. The wind will determine the fate of the straw, the directions in which it will go. Man can become causative by exerting his thoughts and his will, and can oppose the cause of his environment, even his inherited tendencies, which are also causes. Many men have overcome their

heredity and risen above physiological and psychological disadvantages of birth.

Since, however, man is not yet capable of knowing all natural and Cosmic influences, which are causes and to which he is subject, there are many incidents that will surprise and dismay him. Such does not mean that he has been intentionally selected by fate or fortune for the events that follow. It does mean that his exposures to circumstances have been different from others, thus making the difference in the experiences which he has. Since we are often ignorant of these differences which are at times hereditary, they are mystifying and appear as though we are under the aegis of *luck*.

The other sense which is attributed to luck, as said, is *chance*. The believer in chance does not think that the advantages or disadvantages that accrue to him are due to fate or supernatural powers. To him, chance has really a mathematical content. He may admit that the exact formula or series of causes is unknown to him, but often he strives to learn the laws underlying chance so as to direct it in his favor. Chance is related to the law of *probability*. The premise of this law, stated in nontechnical language, is that anything may happen in time. Even the most apparently rigid cycles of recurrence will vary ultimately. The opposite or deviation from a fixed condition or circumstance is bound to occur sometime because the whole universe is subject to change. Further, everything has one or more probable alternatives. And these alternatives recur in every so many thousand, million, billion, or trillion times. Let us look at it in this way. A coin has two different sides, *heads* and *tails*. There are a number of factors which may make it fall "heads up," when tossed into the air. The tails side may be heavier, causing it to plummet toward the earth first because of greater gravitational attraction. The distribution of the weight of the design may cause an unbalancing of the coin so that given the same, or nearly same toss each time it will land nearly always with the same side up. However, where all such factors are equal, then, according to the law of probability and chance, the coin must land in a given number of tosses as many times with heads up as with tails. Thus, for a homely analogy, in a million of such equal tosses, with equal factors involved, a coin will land heads up

a half million times and with tails up the same number of times. This equal number may not be evenly distributed throughout the million tosses. Thus, for example, the coin might land heads up successively for a number of times without once appearing tails up. Then after a great number of tosses a series of tails up would occur.

Frequently an individual encounters a series of the alternate actions, like a number of heads up of a coin in succession. To him it may seem that luck favors him. Actually he has just encountered an aspect of the law of probability. The common or positive way of referring to this law is to call it the *law of averages*. The person who chances a circumstance hopes that the change he wishes may occur just at the time he wants it. In other words, he gambles with this law of probability. Gamblers at the Casino at Monte Carlo, who "play" the roulette wheel have striven for years to work out mathematical equations based on the law of probability. They hope to determine in just what number of plays a number or combination of numbers *must* recur. In fact, it has been related that once or twice in the history of that institution an individual has been able to work out such equations with great success.

This law of probability accounts for some individuals being lucky on certain days in some game when each play will, for a number of plays, occur in their favor, making them the winner. Of course, in some instances the *thoughts* of the individual can and do influence circumstances to their favor, even though they may not realize it. A group of men may be seated, waiting to be called by an official seated before them at a desk to fill a limited number of positions. The concentration of one may compel the man at the desk to look in his direction and to be inclined to point to him to arise before others. The man so selected may be unaware that his intense thought caused it. He may consider himself as but "lucky." The fact is that some of us can and do release our thoughts more easily than others, and we are quite unconscious of it.

Notwithstanding, then, the mysterious circumstances which sometimes seem to surround the so-called lucky person, there is no such condition as luck. We repeat, unrealized causes and the law of probability contribute to those circumstances which are called

lucky. We often experience a series of unfavorable events of a minor nature, all occurring in one day. We then say that nothing is right today. Such is sometimes caused by psychological and physiological conditions. We are nervous and more tense than usual. Consequently we move quickly and not cautiously. Thus we knock things over, spill things on the table, drop objects, or we forget things easier. All such circumstances provoke or become causes of still other aggravating events, until eventually the unthinking person is certain that the day augured bad luck for him.—X

(Reprinted during absence of the Emperor)

Whence Came the Dark Forces?

A soror of the New York Lodge of AMORC asked a question at one of their recent Forum sessions that is well worthy of our consideration. The question was: "From whence came the dark forces and what is their origin?"

Malevolent powers and beings have long been associated with darkness and night. To many persons, darkness is a veil which conceals thaumaturgical, or miraculous powers and evil entities. This conception is primitive and its origin is rooted in the earliest religions. It accounts for the fact that today we symbolize goodness by *light* and evil by *darkness*. Man is far more a creature of suggestion than of reason. What suggests itself as a plausible explanation of a phenomenon or a happening is accepted. What *seems* to be, we rarely doubt.

Light comes out of the darkness of night. Primitive men who huddled in caves, or lived an arboreal existence in trees, must have been deeply impressed by the coming of dawn. During the long hours of the night they were without any light. Even if they possessed a fire, beyond its limited circle were the inky shadows; nothing was visible within them. Yet, from this blackness came strange sounds, cries, shrieks, and roars. Some of the sounds were identified as those of known wild animals; others were cries of beasts who either were only nocturnal, or who emitted no sounds during the day—consequently, primitive man could only imagine what they were like. It is not too presumptuous to assume that man was often attacked by beasts in the darkness which

would hesitate to stalk him in daylight. Such creatures were like things from another world. The actual graying of the skies at dawn dispelled the deep shadows of the night; the strange noises grew less. The terror-stricken troglodyte could once again identify familiar objects and landmarks. It was as though the world had returned to him. With growing light, his self-confidence also returned, and with the warmth of the sun, there came his accustomed bodily comfort. The day was inviting, warm, less terrible than the invisible realities of night.

Darkness falls over the light of day and extinguishes it. It is like a cloak that masks man's world, isolating him from all that which is necessary to his existence. It is also like a thief who steals the realities of the world, leaving man destitute, helpless, and at the mercy of unseen terrors.

In most mythologies, the abode of unhappy spirits was dark and gloomy. The Greek *Hades* was just such a place, peopled with monsters and strange beings. The Polynesians considered darkness as a kind of subterranean cavern into which the world slips at night. The early Egyptians thought the sun died each evening and was resurrected every morning. In the interval, the sun was said to move with extreme difficulty through the realm of darkness. The stars and moon were "lesser lights," partially guiding the sun through the canopy of night. Among the ancients it was assumed that there was a continual *strife* between light and darkness. Each had its characteristics and strove for supremacy, which was the domination of man. The two causes, light and darkness, were apotheosized—each had its god. The various gods of light and darkness were too numerous to mention here. Perhaps the best known are those of Zoroastrianism. Ahura-Mazda depicted light, learning and the spiritual qualities; Ahriman was the god of darkness, ignorance and despair. These two deities were continually in conflict; mankind was their hapless victim.

Evil gods—gods of death, disease and calamity, have long been associated with darkness, or with night and the moon. In Polynesia, Congo is the god of darkness, of night, and of the instigation of nefarious acts. More generally, all demons, evil spirits, and ghosts have been associated with darkness. This

is not alone due to man's primordial fear of darkness and the unknown. It is caused also by still another psychological factor. Men are wont to conceal activities of which they are ashamed, or which may bring them the rebuke of their fellows. When men intend to commit a crime, or an evil deed, the darkness of night is favored, for it obscures their identity. Thieves, murderers, and rapists have always applied their evil arts more freely under the protecting cover of the shadows of night. If, then, it be presumed or *imagined* that this world is peopled with malevolent supernatural beings—demons and evil spirits—the darkness of night would be their preferred abode. The two conditions seem to suggest to the primitive mind a relationship. Since the primitive mind is not given to analysis, there is little or no question of such a presumed relationship between evil and darkness.

Many heinous crimes committed by human agencies in the past were never solved due to the lack of methods of criminal detection. Since superficial examination would divulge no connection with a mortal or *natural* cause, the usual assumption was that the crimes were committed by supernatural beings. Since, as well, such crimes were frequently committed at night, it took only a very little stretch of the imagination to credit them to malevolent forces or entities who "dwell in the darkness of night." Since darkness, both of earth and the underground, was the milieu or center of demons and spirits of the deceased, they could not have their dwelling in light. In other words, evil beings of supernatural origin—demons, devils, and the like—were conceived not to have merely chosen darkness as their habitat, but it was thought in some way to contribute to their existence. Darkness was thought to have a destructive, malefic quality of which the demons, and their kind, had to partake. Thus, they were continually confined to such a realm, and could not subsist in light. It is for this reason that many superstitions and mythologies go at length into an explanation of how *light* in any form—the rising sun, or a lamp—will dispel nefarious influences. The spirits of the deceased are made to flee in abject terror, back to their graves when the veil of darkness is torn asunder by the first rays of light in the eastern heavens. Conversely, the gods of virtue and goodness can-

not exist but in light, for light is part of their substance, together with morality and benevolence. We can see that light and darkness have been made to have certain moral properties in themselves—a kind of substance upon which their respective gods or forces depend. The Babylonians held that in the day there existed safety and happiness and that in the night there *must* lurk danger and woe.

The peoples of antiquity having this terror for darkness, possessed an exceptional number of lamps as archaeological excavations have disclosed. Notably in Palestine “and belonging to the Semitic period” light became the weapon by which darkness could be combated. If man was to become the victim of a conflict between light and darkness, and if he desired victory for light, he must give his support to it. Lamps, or light in any form, invoke the beneficent powers of light, it was conceived. Thus, lamps became a fetish and eventually a symbol of the light of vision and understanding and also of the irradiance of the spiritual self. One of the duties of the priests in the temples of ancient Egypt was to attend the numerous lamps and torches. The torches were not tended solely for physical illumination, but also for the symbolism attributed to light.

So impressed were the ancients with the importance of light and darkness that they assigned to days, months, and even to directions, terms which related to them. The Hebrews called the north *safron*, meaning “obscure or dark place.” South was named *darom*, “bright, or illuminated place.” The east was known among the Egyptians, Hebrews, and other ancients, as the place of “the rising splendor,” or by a phrase of equivalent meaning.

This symbolism of light and darkness has descended to us. In the higher religions even those extant in our times, the beneficent or lofty gods are connected with light and dwell in the sky. They dwell in “eternal brightness.” Satanic and malevolent forces dwell in the darkness of the under-regions.

Are there actually so-called dark, or evil forces? In other words, are there destructive forces which are indigenous to darkness? Most assuredly *not*! Such beliefs are the grossest kind of superstition. They are an atavistic return to the primitive reasoning which we have been considering. In the first place, there are no natural forces which

are imbued with an intentional purpose to destroy. All forces and powers are of the same Cosmic order. The manner in which they function and the results may be at times contrary to what man has established as his own ends or necessity. An earthquake, or seismographic disturbance, is a quite natural phenomenon. It is not a *teleological* cause, that is, a conscious or purposeful cause. It does not willfully seek to destroy, nor is it a manifestation by any *mind* with such a purpose. Since its function may often destroy life and counteract man’s conception of what is *good*, man is inclined to think of an earthquake as being evil; those who are superstitious would interpret it as being directed by evil forces.

Man, alone, can be an evil force. Man has set up certain values, and when he intentionally acts, or seeks ways which oppose conscience, such deeds constitute “evil.” The forces he employs are not evil in themselves. The hammer which is used to slay a man is not intrinsically evil, but the intent behind its use is evil. Obviously, there are many physical laws which man exerts for evil purposes. Such men are evil, but they have no special malevolent dark forces at their command. When we refer to the opposition of the dark forces, we are merely borrowing an archaic term and applying it to mean the *misuse* of natural forces and powers by some one person, or group of persons. The force which some men use for dark purposes can be used equally as well for light, for constructive and benevolent ends. There is no greater example of this than the application of the atomic forces, which are so much talked of today. The nuclear energy of the atom is not a dark or a light force in the moral sense. It is a natural energy of the Cosmic. Man may use it for whatever *light* or *darkness* has come to symbolize to him.—X

(Reprinted during absence of the Imperator)

Is Birth Control Mystically Wrong?

A soror arises to ask this Forum: “Does the practice of birth control constitute a violation of any Cosmic principles? Do those who do so, interfere with the Cosmic law of compensation or karma?”

The entire problem of birth control is a complex one. It involves economic, social,

and religious factors. It is therefore very controversial. It may be said that one's agreement, or disagreement, with the practice depends upon which of the three factors is the most closely related to him. The term *birth control* is a common one, the actual meaning being control of conception. It is a mechanical, or chemical, means of limiting births, rather than abstaining from relations leading to conception. Those who favor birth control are usually not advocating abstinence from sexual relations but rather the prevention of the birth of undesired children.

In modern times the first public utterances upon this subject were met with violent rebuff, on the basis that it was a subject unfit for public dissemination. An extensive pamphlet on the subject was written by Dr. Charles Knowlton in the late nineteenth century, entitled *Fruits of Philosophy*. Annie Besant, the prominent Theosophist, favored Dr. Knowlton's work and assisted in its distribution, for which she was persecuted. Margaret Sanger was perhaps the most noted advocate of birth control, sacrificing herself so that the facts about the matter might come to public light.

One of the strongest arguments in favor of birth control has been the economic factor. At one time it was expounded that the world's population increase was outrunning the natural resources and that this would eventually result in world-wide starvation. In the most progressive countries where education has brought about mechanization of farm equipment and the processing of food, the food supply has kept abreast of the increase in population. On the other hand, in countries such as India, the increase of the population is a serious menace; the methods of planting and reaping crops are most primitive and laborious. The fertile lands under cultivation are not sufficient to supply the increasing masses. The results are periodic famines. The argument is advanced that in the most advanced civilized lands in modern times, the adequacy of food is not merely caused by improved methods or products, but is caused, also, by the holding down of the birth rate. Long tables of statistics have been prepared to show the rate of birth and infant mortality according to economic levels of society. The following is but an example:

BIRTHS PER THOUSAND

1921

Upper Middle Class.....	98
Intermediate Class.....	104
Skilled Workers.....	141
Unskilled Workers.....	178

INFANT MORTALITY PER THOUSAND

1921

Upper Middle Class.....	38
Unskilled Workers.....	97

This would show that those who are less economically prepared—the unskilled workers whose income is lowest—have, in fact, the most children. Among this same group the infant mortality is the highest. This, it is said, is due to malnutrition, and to lack of proper sanitary conditions in the home and community. The general conclusion formed from such statistical tables is that the more prosperous the social class, the lower the fertility.

Is there a mean as to the number of children a family should have in order to maintain the world's population so that it will not decline too rapidly and yet not cause an economic burden to the family? One sociological calculation is that there should be no fewer than three children to a family. There have been those who have been alarmed by the declining birth rate in England. Such a decline might be evaluated as a military hazard. From the economic point of view, it was discovered that in normal times the decline gave greater assurance of security of income. Further, it provided an equalization of opportunity for education. It must be apparent to any thinker that unless business and commerce can provide increased opportunities, a rapidly increasing birth rate would presage an employment problem. Especially is this true in nations which are highly mechanized, as America and Great Britain, where one man with a machine now does the work of what ten, or possibly one hundred, persons did formerly.

Where religion does not interfere and knowledge of the control of conception is not suppressed, the working classes desire to restrict the number of children born. Many families just could not afford the almost annual births with their attendant expenses. Among the indigent classes it is not unusual to find a mother with an infant child in her

arms, going about her duties, expecting another child, and with several children of preschool age clustered about her. The harassed woman must take care of this brood, care for her home, and perhaps assist in some manner in providing the family income. Because of a drastic economic condition, the mother is often undernourished and has to resume her heavy duties before she is well able to, following the frequent childbirths; this causes her to suffer, sometimes permanently. It may be argued that if the economic situation were improved, the mother could acquire assistance for her large family; and that the cause of her distress is economic and not due to the births of numerous children. The fact remains, however, that all through history there have been economically distressed classes. There is no indication that the needy will not always be with us. Therefore, those who find themselves in such a status should be able to control conception until they are better able to care for the children.

Another reason advanced for birth control is the prevention of the spread of disease—both mental and physical. Idiots and the otherwise mentally deficient should not produce offspring. When such persons are already married, they should be encouraged to practice control of conception.

One sociologist has stated that because of the rapid increase in population the *innate* bodily and mental characteristics influence it more greatly than do the *acquired* ones. Uncontrolled birth, that is, unplanned parentage, means the inculcating of many bad characteristics, the hereditary aspects of which become stronger influences than what would ordinarily be the result of the individual's natural selection. Where children can be reared properly, shown adequate care, and trained in character development, the self-control is strong and the natural selection of conduct is higher, and tends to evolve society.

Those who favor birth control, from the economic, sociological, and medical point of view, are not necessarily urging *fewer* children, but rather sufficient interludes between births in order to protect the health of the mother, and to assure the family recovery from the economic burden these births entail, and to give the parents sufficient oppor-

tunity to properly care for the child, physically and psychologically.

One of the strongest opponents of birth control is *religion*; of the many religions, the Roman Church is its greatest opponent. It has been declared that the Roman Church is opposed to birth control because it acquires its temporal strength from the great number of its adherents, and the early influence it exerts upon the child. However, a cardinal of the Church has spoken with respect to the Church's position. The substance of his argument is based upon religious precepts and the dogma of the Church. He holds that there is no law of the Church prohibiting *continence* among married people; they may, in other words, abstain from sexual relations for spiritual reasons if they so desire without offending God or the Church. However, the cardinal further explains, to exercise the act of generation and to frustrate the purpose of it is to antecede any ecclesiastical law. He means, from this point of view, that indulgence in the sex act for other than the purpose of conceiving children is more than a violation of any law of the Church—that it is the violation of moral law, as well. The cardinal points out that it is not sinful to act freely in accordance with your natural desires *if* you do so for the purpose for which they were intended. This would mean that sex relations are for procreation only. Any form of birth prevention is, the cardinal contends, in effect an emphasizing of sex gratification. He concludes with the ecclesiastical opinion that marriage elevates people to a sense of responsibility, at least to "a supernatural dignity to cooperate with God, in peopling heaven with the sons of God."

From the unorthodox and mystical point of view, birth control does not interfere with the law of karma. Remember the ontological law expounded in one of the early Rosicrucian degrees, namely, that "the Soul enters the body with the first breath of life." Where there is no body, there is no soul-personality manifest! Until the body exists independently—as at birth—the Soul does not manifest through it. Consequently, such beneficent or other karma, as a Soul must experience, cannot come about until it expresses itself through a separate consciousness. The mystical principle is, however, different in its application in the matter of abortion, which is the destruction of the embryo. It is a wilful

tearing down of a creation of Cosmic and natural law. However, in the event of an emergency, abortion is sometimes practiced in order to save a mother's life. Such an operation is obviously not for materially selfish reasons.

From the most rigid mystical interpretation, sexual relationship should be abstained from except for the purpose of the conception of a child. Our natural desires are given to us, not for personal gratification, but to bring about higher ends. We are made to enjoy eating, not merely for the purpose of appeasing our appetites, and pleasing our palates, but from a natural compulsion to nourish our bodies. On the other hand, frustration creates subnormal beings, unable to further moral and Cosmic principles. Likewise, when children become neglected, because of unplanned or uncontrolled childbearing, and become criminals, or diseased, it is a Cosmic violation. There is only one middle path. It is the conformity to the highest moral relationship which one's marital and economic circumstances permit. This will undoubtedly be acceptable in the omnipotence of the Cosmic mind. In other words, all circumstances with respect to whether one should have children, or as to how many one may rear to be worthy of life, would be weighed on the Cosmic scale of righteousness.—X

(Reprinted during absence of the Emperor)

Suggestion and Autosuggestion

A frater of New York State requests of our Forum, "Will the Forum please discuss the difference between suggestion and autosuggestion? Some persons use them interchangeably, but can we definitely distinguish what suggestion is?"

To reduce a psychological phenomenon to a simple and homely definition, I would say that "suggestion is a ready-made idea." I think we are all quite aware of the fact that our ideas are either directly formed from our experiences, the impressions of our senses, or they are the result of a process of reasoning. Simple ideas are of the former kind. They correspond directly to what we may see or hear, for example. The idea of *red* arises directly as a result of our eyes responding to certain wave lengths of light which cause the color sensation of red. On the other hand, the latter kind of idea is the

result of a process of reasoning, of combining ideas had by the senses into more complex ones. When we perceive or conceive something which gives rise to an idea other than itself, that is suggestion. For analogy, if I perceive a fiery red wallpaper and am obliged to gaze at it for some time, I begin to feel warm and perhaps believe that the temperature of the room has risen. Under such circumstances, I am experiencing the influence of suggestion. The simple idea of red has engendered in my mind ideas of heat and temperature increase which do not exist in the wave lengths of light that reach my eyes nor in the color *red* itself.

We can also say that suggestion is the acceptance of any idea not arrived at through an intentional, cognitive process. This means that suggestions are *evolved* ideas, but we do not evolve them consciously. They bring about their own development.

Just how do certain stimuli produce ideas apart from themselves? In other words, what is the basic cause of suggestion? There are several explanations. Here we shall offer some of the better-known examples. We are susceptible to conditions. We tend to adapt ourselves to physical conditions such as environment and the behavior of our fellows. This adaption is often a *mimicry*, which is the attempt to share in the behavior of others. We like to do what others do. We do not want to feel isolated or strange—we want to emulate or copy others. Words of others have a profound and genuine effect upon us. When we hear the comments made by persons, we often begin to react unconsciously to the ideas which such comments cause to be formed within our subconsciousness. A word heard may cause the association with it, in our subjective minds, of related ideas, drawn from our own personal experiences. Finally, we begin to act in response to such ideas. Printed words and designs in advertisements accomplish this effect. On a warm summer day, you may see a billboard which has an illustration of a large thermometer at one end, showing a temperature of ninety degrees. At the other end of the board is a realistic painting of a cube of ice with a bottle of a soft-drink protruding. The whole background of the board is done in a pale ice-green, with a little frosty white along the edges. Shortly thereafter you begin to

feel thirsty and even more conscious of the heat of the day.

Compound ideas are composed of sensations and the lesser ideas which they form. Perceiving just one of the lesser ideas may cause us to experience all the others which have been formerly associated with it. Suppose you are so constituted that you become faint and quite nauseated when walking along a ledge at a height or when balancing on a tall ladder. Just seeing another person clinging precariously to a high telephone or telegraph pole would cause you to have a recurrence of all the emotional disturbances and physical effects of being in a high place. You would feel nauseated, your heart would palpitate, your breath would be labored, and you might even feel faint. You have begun to mimic involuntarily what you imagine is the behavior of the one on the pole and what would be your own behavior under such circumstances.

When we *imagine* a thing we often stimulate ourselves just as effectively as if we were seeing or hearing an actual event. By creating an image of some event in our minds, we suggest all the conditions related to it. The ideas of our imagery associate with themselves all experiences of memory which have a relationship. We recall sensations had under similar conditions. Just say to certain persons, "Imagine scratching your fingernails along the surface of a slate." They immediately will shudder at the thought of the sensations.

Considerable of our suggestions are entirely unconscious. The ideas formed are responded to by the individual, who is aware neither of his response to them nor of their cause. In experimental psychology a subject, while standing erect, has had a small pin hooked into the collar of his coat without his being aware of it. From it a thread was led to a recording drum. Any movement of the subject was therefore registered on the drum. At first the individual would be standing quite still. However, when he was told to stand still and avoid any swaying, the drum would indicate a perceptible swaying thereafter. The suggestion to avoid swaying produced the reaction of the behavior of actual swaying. The idea was implanted in the individual's subjective mind and the relative motion of swaying resulted.

Another example of suggestion by mimicry is to have a subject "accidentally" see the test of another subject. The second subject, in other words, as if by accident sees the first one, who was blindfolded, being instructed to reach for some object in front of him and only succeeding after several attempts. When blindfolded, the second subject imagines that he too will be told to reach for such an object. The recording drum shows that mimicry has caused him to sway forward in the direction where the object was. A subject told to remain rigid but to imagine himself swaying backward and forward, will actually begin to do so physically even though very slightly. There is a muscular response to the thought of swaying. The suggestion, as an idea, has caused a subjective behavior.

Sounds and lights as external stimuli produce emotional accompaniment. Persons have suddenly begun whistling a tune when in the surrounding of a particular combination of colored lights. The lights as a stimulus released the memory experience of a theatrical performance when the stage was similarly lighted, and a popular tune which was sung on the occasion impressed itself upon the memory of the individual. The person was conforming to a behavior pattern of recalling the musical number when ideas associated with it were recollected. Sounds that have been identified with unpleasant experiences will cause emotional responses which accompanied the original experience. A person who has been in a severe automobile accident and who suffered shock may shriek and tremble when subsequently he hears the loud sound of crashing glass. We all develop certain behavior patterns. Anything which causes a recurrence of ideas associated with them finds us responding to the familiar pattern of conduct.

Thus we conceive that suggestion is that which gives rise to ideas other than the stimulus itself. However, the external stimulus does not create the other ideas. It merely starts a chain reaction. The mind must first have available a variety of ideas, the content of which is related to what is perceived, or there is no suggestion. If the mind reasons about what it perceives and eventually comes to a conclusion, that is, establishes complex ideas, we repeat, such is not a suggestion—the idea of a suggestion must ap-

pear "ready-made." It must *seem* to arise out of what is perceived. The wider the range of experience, the greater is the possible adaption of ideas to the external stimulus—to the cause of the suggestion. The person with a large and varied experience will find many of his observations suggesting former experiences which he has had. Certain sounds may suggest, for example, a steamer's whistle in the fog. Certain scents will remind him of new-mown hay, and so forth.

There are also what are technically known as *contrary* suggestions. These consist of the arousal of ideas which *oppose* or are contrary to the content of the suggestion. This is explained by the fact that the pattern of behavior to oppose the idea, which is aroused by the suggestion, is stronger than the one to conform to it. Let us use an analogy. It is a warm spring night. The air is sweet and fragrant with the scent of flowers. The heavy air causes the sound of distant laughter and conversation to be easily heard. The suggestion is to forget one's obligations and luxuriate in the pleasantness of the evening. However, there immediately arises a strong determination to persist in one's scheduled study hour. This is an example of contrary suggestion. It discloses that the pattern of determination is greater than the tendency of avoidance of responsibility.

We must not fail to mention the *pregnancy* theory of suggestion. This is the tendency of the mind to complete an idea or a symbol of an idea which in itself suggests completion. If we look at a circle that is three-fourths complete, the mind will fill in the gap; it will think of it as a complete circle rather than as anything else. By pregnancy is meant that the thing which we perceive is pregnant with the possibility of an idea and that we cannot escape that idea even though the thing itself doesn't conform directly to it. Thus, the three-quarter circle isn't complete, but it suggests completeness.

What of autosuggestion? Autosuggestion is ideational, that is, strictly a mental process; it does not arise from anything experienced outside ourselves. We fix certain ideas in our minds by autosuggestion. We *will*, and then give emphasis, causing them to draw to themselves all related ideas and behavior. For example, repeating of affirmations is a form of autosuggestion. If I con-

tinually repeat that I hate John Jones, who is known to me, and do so with sincere conviction, I associate with the affirmation all the emotional responses and behavior of hate. I come to sneer at his name and feel contempt for his presence. I act belligerent when he approaches me. Finally, when I merely repeat the affirmation, I am aroused to anger and the behavior of hatred.

Autosuggestion is a continual application of certain ideas to ourselves. It behooves us, therefore, to have no *prepossessed* ideas. Ideas to which we give credence should first be weighed to find whether or not they are false. These fixed or persistent ideas which we have may become autosuggestions. They may establish behavior within us which might be quite detrimental to our whole lives. The person who says, "I cannot do this," even before he has actually tried or fully reasoned about it, is giving himself an autosuggestion. By saying he cannot do something, he is inhibiting and dispersing all the powers and faculties which are necessary for its accomplishment. The boy who says that he cannot jump the hurdle before he has actually tried to do so is *suppressing* all the will necessary to command the strength and tension of his muscles so he may clear the hurdle. Consequently, by such autosuggestion he would fail if he tried. Autosuggestion is the function whereby you create the suggestion or the idea by your own arbitrary decision instead of ideas being aroused within you by an external factor.

Temporary physical distractions may often cause autosuggestion. Common colds often affect the hearing temporarily. Inattention results during the affliction. Even when one has recovered from the affliction, one ceases to pay attention to *sound* stimuli for some time. One thinks one cannot hear. This suggestion causes us not to pay attention and consequently we do not hear.

Coué, the French psychologist, a few years ago advocated a system of autosuggestion in connection with what is known as *psychotherapy*. He suggested to certain patients that they suggest to themselves their improvement by repeating the affirmation, "Day by day in every way I am getting better and better." Psychologically, this method has been questioned as to its practicability. The suggestion would be effective if it could engender any supporting ideas in the mind,

which would give it conviction. If the patient can associate with the idea of his improvement any slight actual changes in his condition, then the suggestion has tremendous impetus in the encouraging state of mind which it produces. On the other hand, if the affirmation only causes the patient to become more conscious of his disability, the affirmation becomes ineffectual by its obvious falsity. An autosuggestion must have *realism* or it becomes nothing but an empty affirmation.

We must not overlook the fact that our own *Rosicrucian* monographs treat quite thoroughly the nature of suggestion in connection with habit and the processes of our objective and subjective minds. One of our monographs, which treats of these subjects, defines suggestion as "... a request, a wish, an order or law of one's objective mind to the subjective mind." This we can understand to mean that the objective mind has some experience, perceives some particular which it passes on as a definite wish or request to the subjective mind. Since the latter, we are told in our monographs, reasons *deductively*, it accepts the emphatic wish or order from the objective mind and develops it into a general idea. It then puts into effect all the involuntary actions, movements, impulses, sensations, and emotions which such a general idea had produced when it was formerly conceived by the objective mind. An illustration is given in one of the monographs that makes this principle quite clear. A subject experiences heat when he places his hand in a box in which he previously had seen a lighted candle but which has been removed without his knowledge.

The subjective mind normally obeys the commands of the objective mind. If the suggestion is emphatic enough, it will be acted upon, the exception being that the subjective mind will not oppose what constitutes the dictates of the *inner self*. Moral convictions and conduct which are of our spiritual and psychic being, and which we have established in response to them, are a part of our inner consciousness, and they cannot be altered by suggestion. One who would not consciously steal cannot be caused to do so by a suggestion. The fabric of *self* and of the subjective mind is stronger than the ideas arising within the objective mind.—X

(Reprinted during absence of the Emperor)

Fear of Death

Now comes a frater from British Guiana and addresses our Forum. He asks: "Why is it that many persons fear the earthly mass, the body of one who has passed through transition and which lies before them inert?"

An exaggerated fear or horror of death and the dead is known as *necrophobia*. Such is an abnormal state, and we presume that that is not what the frater refers to. We believe he has reference to the usual repulsion displayed by the average individual toward human mortal remains. It is with this that we shall concern ourselves.

Three great mysteries have plagued the mind of man; they are *birth*, *life*, and *death*. For untold centuries primitive man could not even explain the biological process by which birth occurred. Even today we have not mastered all the complexities of embryology, nutrition, and growth. However, primitive man was long unaware of even the process of reproduction and its relation to birth. The pregnancy of a woman was an awe-inspiring miracle. The cause of the event was left entirely to the speculation of primitive reasoning.

The conscious state, or interval, of life was the next great mystery. What was man? What was his relationship to his surroundings, to things both animate and inanimate? The immanent forces and feelings, which we now classify as emotions, instincts, and psychic functions, including a realization of the duality of being, made life a strange and adventurous experience to the primitive man. Early man—and man today—was often as afraid of himself as of anything apart from him. Something occurred within him at times: moods, and sentiments which alarmed him. That which is *unknown* evokes fear. The unknown precipitates a sense of hopelessness and helplessness. How can we cope with something that is intangible and not comprehensible? Death appears as a truncating of existence. The transition is quite apparent to even the simplest intellect. Here was a being of vitality, with mental and physical powers of accomplishment. He acted and responded, generally, as did his fellows. Then, next, all those attributes associated with life, such as consciousness, locomotion and self-expression, were absent. What hap-

pened to these personal powers? Did they depart or were they seized, snatched from the very bosom of the living body?

No normal person wants death. Yet death is inevitable. It steals upon man as the shadows of evening creep up the slopes of a mountain. Man desires life. It was presumed that some entity must exert this paralyzing influence of death. Therefore, that which imposes death upon man seems to be an *enemy*, a thing or condition to be feared. No man has successfully countered death and remained eternally upon earth. Therefore, man is helplessly exposed to death, the cessation of life on earth—at least it ends his current existence here. Further, what occurs to the intangible element of *self* which departs or is removed at death? Does it fare well in another existence? It is presumed that it has another existence, for no trace of it is found here after death.

The conscience of man informed him whether or not his conduct in life was compatible with what is accepted as morally right or good. If he had reason to believe that his mortal behavior was evil, then he feared judgment in the hereafter and consequent punishment. What this punishment might be, the fertile imagination of man has caused to be expounded in his various religions. Death, then, exposes man to a life hereafter which may, according to his religious concepts of it, be fraught with great uncertainty. Perhaps, too, he may be subject to severe tests and trials, in which he may be found wanting.

This afterworld, this life beyond, is not objectively perceivable. All those who reside therein must then, according to elementary reasoning, be invisible. Further, it is the place of unlimited powers, forces which exceed mortal abilities and intelligence. Man is in the precarious position, when living, of being at the mercy of them. When one dies, his body immediately has an affinity with this afterworld. It has been thought that the spirit that goes on may preside over its own body, that a nexus is established between the body in this world and the departed personality. Any abuse of the dead body is considered an offense against the departed spirit. Likewise, any contact with the body of the deceased is likely to conjure up forces and powers of the world beyond because of its direct connection with it.

Again, there is the fact that most deaths occur in an atmosphere of horror. Many deaths are violent, due to accident, murder or other tragic events. Thus, death becomes, to the simple mind, a symbol of grief, of the mysterious and the fearsome. It develops and arouses emotions of fear and repugnance. These psychological reactions have become instinctive in man and even in the lower animals. Dogs and primates are curious about their own dead and generally fearsome—unless they kill their kind in a rage.

It takes an *enlightened* man, with a broad philosophical and mystical conception of death, to be able to combat the fear of it. It is first necessary to understand death in the sense of the physical law of change. Departure of life from the human form is not unlike the transition of other material and immaterial objects of our environment. The seasons change. Flowers droop and seem to wither away, to be reborn in the spring. Matter is constantly undergoing a change. There is no constancy in anything. Form has no permanence. Nothing is—everything is only becoming, as Heraclitus told us many centuries ago. Consequently, the human existence can be no exception. Death is not mysterious, but an expression of natural law. Our grief, if there be need of any, should not be because of death but because of the loss of that particular kind of relationship which we have had with the personality while it resided in material form. For analogy, when a friend goes on a long journey, we miss his presence. Yet we do not consider him forever lost. Death is a journey. The soul has departed from one state of existence to another. Whatever of the mortal was indestructible and not corruptible remains so. Since, in the Cosmic, there is no such condition as place, the soul doesn't go to reside in some distant land. Each part of the Cosmic—if we may use the term *part*—is as close to one as to another, for it is complete unity. The soul continues, but it manifests differently.

To use another humble analogy, when we turn off the electric switch, we have not destroyed the light which a moment before radiated from the lamp; we have but altered the conditions so that the electrical energy does not now manifest as light. So, too, death changes the relation between the body and soul, so that the personality, the result

of them, does not manifest as before. You will find that those who think of death in this, or a similarly enlightened, vein do not have a fear of death. Even the most mystically evolved, however, often reveal sorrow upon the transition of a loved one. They realize that the consciousness of the deceased has *crossed a threshold* from the chamber of life into the Cosmic and thus has been *initiated* into a higher Degree. However, the immediate loss of that intimacy of physical companionship, the former smile, the handclasp, the familiar speech and footstep, does affect the emotions. The character, the personality and mannerisms of the living are part of him. It is difficult to dissociate them from the soul. It is these things that the mystically enlightened may grieve for.

Those who actually fear death itself and the dead are those who labor under superstition and the impact of primitive instinct, as explained above. If many of those who profess to fear death were to be interrogated, it would be found that it is *not* death but the pain and suffering which often precede it that they fear. They are intelligent enough to understand that when consciousness departs, when death has actually occurred, pain and suffering no longer exist. They likewise have no fear of what may occur after death because of their enlightened mystical or philosophical conception. These same persons will admit that they would not fear death if assured that it would not be preceded by severe pain or tragic experience. Consequently, it is the state of living and suffering which they fear and not the departure itself.

Let us recall the words of Epictetus, the ancient Stoic philosopher: "What is death? A tragic mask. Turn it and examine it. See, it doesn't bite. The poor body must be separated from the spirit, either now or later, as it was separated from it before." . . .

"Pass, then, through thy little space of time conformably with nature and end thy journey in content, just as an olive falls off when it is ripe, blessing nature who produced it, and thanking the tree on which it grew."

—X

(Reprinted during absence of the Imperator)

Measuring Yourself by Others

In a recent interview a soror said, in the course of her conversation, "I am greatly discouraged with my progress. I meet other Rosicrucians at our lodge who seem to have accomplished much more in their studies than I have, during the same length of time of membership. My membership has not been perfunctory, I have diligently studied, yet I have not had the experiences of some of these other fratres and sorores. Consequently measuring myself by them, I have made no progress."

The soror was making a serious mistake in the manner in which she sought to determine her personal progress. She wrongly presumed that each person is equal, that each has the same latent talents, abilities, and is subject to like development. If that were so, of course, each being exposed to equal opportunities and training should make the same personal progress. The fact remains, however, that we are as unlike psychically as we are physically and mentally. Without going deeply into the psychological and physiological aspects of man's being, we do at least know that the association areas of man's cerebrum greatly differ. These areas are responsible for the many natural talents which we display. They account for our having, for example, an outstanding memory for names or faces, or our having a great aptitude for music and for mathematics or, perhaps, for mechanics instead of literature. Two individuals may be coequal in intelligence—that is have the ability to discern and to learn alike—and yet one will be more responsive to a certain subject than will the other. Recall your own school days. There were several boys and girls who excelled in their studies in your class. All received excellent marks. Notwithstanding their nearly equal application to their studies, each displayed some exceptional ability in one or more topics. One may have received better marks in grammar, another in history, and so forth.

The Rosicrucian studies are so prepared that their subject matter touches upon nearly every aspect of man's complex nature. They aid one's physical being, they stimulate mental faculties and as well awaken and release the Cosmic powers resident within man. You will find that the teachings devoted to healing may actually help one individual far

more than another. Certain exercises given the student may be just what is needed to correct a malady with which he is suffering. He would therefore respond immediately. Another's ailments may be more complex. Perhaps he is not quite certain of the nature of his affliction; therefore he does not apply the most effective Rosicrucian treatment. Patently, then, his recovery would be much slower. This would not indicate that he had failed in the teachings. Then, again, some individuals begin their Rosicrucian studies in a cycle of greater advancement. Consequently, with the same effort, they will be able to accomplish more. Each of us is in a various degree of evolvement of our soul-personalities. If some are a number of incarnations in advance of another, they will be able to master certain principles more easily. They are *not*, however, making any more rapid progress for their own cycle of soul-personality than is one who is in a lower cycle. Each is progressing in accordance with the unfoldment of his personal consciousness. Let us look at it in this light. There may be several flights of stairs in a building; one man is on the first landing, another is on the fourth. Both begin to walk up the stairs at the same time. Each will be making the same progress on his particular flight of stairs, yet the man climbing the fourth flight will be three flights above because he began at a higher level.

Measure your progress by *yourself*, not by that which others may be making. Take stock of yourself as you are *now*, after having been in AMORC for several months or years. Were the thoughts which are now commonplace to you endemic to you *before* you were a member? Could you at that time, give intelligent answers equal to what you now can with respect to subjects such as soul consciousness, Self, habit, and the functions of the objective and subjective minds? Think of the subjects and the techniques of concentration, memorizing, and projection that have been taught to you. Once these subjects were either unknown to you or were mysteries which perplexed you. You cannot but admit, if fair to yourself—and to AMORC—and if you have studied with a degree of consistency, that you are now rid of many false beliefs which once possessed you. You will further admit that many ideas which have become fearsome superstitions to others

are now known to you as natural laws and Cosmic principles. There is no Rosicrucian, I believe I am safe in saying, who has consistently studied his monographs and who has followed the experiments provided, who is not conscious of having advanced from his former nonmembership status. If you are aware of any advanced knowledge, of self-confidence, better health, a broader and more tolerant outlook on life, or new personal power, which you did not have before your AMORC affiliation and which is the consequence of the membership, then most certainly you have progressed!

You are a Rosicrucian member, not to match your progress with others or necessarily to be as others are, but rather you are a member for personal improvement and that you may better serve the Cosmic on this plane. Be unto Self what you will; let others be as it is decreed they shall be.—X

(Reprinted during absence of the Imperator)

Why Do Dreams Recur?

A frater from the State of Florida rises to address our Forum. He says: "I would like some information on the subject of dreams, particularly those which recur occasionally during a long period of years. Though my business experience ended a number of years ago, I have dreams that I am still in business, but apparently unable to accomplish anything."

"My brother, who is a pharmacist, tells me that he frequently dreams that he is back in his store trying to put up prescriptions, with the store full of waiting customers. There are no clerks around and no clean utensils to be had for use in the making up of the prescriptions."

Dreams are perhaps one of the oldest mysteries of man. Perhaps they were likewise the first experience that man had of the duality of his own being. In fact, some authors on the subject of primitive religion and the psychology of religion believe that the idea of soul and of the inner self came to man from his dream experiences. To the primitive mind, dreams were as actual as the waking state. The acts which occurred in dreams were considered as being those of another self—an ethereal being that departed from the body to perform the acts of the dream during sleep. It is not strange, therefore, that

superstitions have developed about dreams, many of which persist today.

In modern times, as a result of psychological experimentation, we have come to learn much about the causes of dreams. We know that dreams are not of supernatural origin. On the other hand, we are still not certain as to the exact cause of every type of dream. We do know that all objects and actions which are set forth in a dream are *symbolic*; they stand for some subliminal, some subconscious thought or experience. The difficulty exists in finding the relationship between objects of a dream and that which caused them. A certain thing or conduct in a dream is a symbol of some antecedent thought or experience, or at least associated with one. But which one? Why do I dream that I am falling? What is the cause of my dreaming that I am flying merely by flapping my arms? The superstitious person attributes omens to the elements of his dreams. In other words, he relates them to some incident of actual experience from which he tries to draw a meaning. However, the psychologist knows that the actual stimulus which caused the dream may be quite different from the one which the thinking mind attributes to it.

Many of our dreams are the result of sensory stimulation—that is, the stimulation of our receptor senses of feeling, smelling, and hearing, while we sleep. Such dreams are caused by external agents. The stimulation of the senses during sleep will not generally produce the same results as when awake. Only random ideation occurs, causing dreams. The body may be slightly touched while the subject is asleep. The stimulus will not be sufficient to awaken the sleeper. The ideation or the ideas which he has, as a result of such a sensation, will not be exactly the same as if he were awake. Such ideational processes have a low degree of integration, that is, the ideas are not tied together in as orderly a fashion; they are haphazard, resulting in the peculiar nature of a dream. In a waking state, if you experience certain sensations from which ideas would follow, you would be governed by the law of probability; you would logically reject certain ideas that came to mind as being highly improbable, as being the cause of such sensations as you experienced. In the dream state, where this low integration, or joining of ideas, exists, the law of probability would not exist and whatever

ideas would follow from the stimulation would constitute your dream.

Let us cite a few examples. Auditory sensations, while one sleeps, like the rumbling of a distant truck, may be elaborated into a dream of a battle or a storm. Cutaneous (skin) sensations sometimes give rise to dreams of wading in water or lying in the sun. Some persons suffer from head noises. These, or sensations arising from circulatory changes in the ear, are interpreted during sleep as thunder, and the elaboration of the dream adds lightning and wind.

In an analysis of seven hundred fifty dreams made for psychological tests, gummed paper, an inch square, was placed upon various parts of the sleeper's anatomy. Various dreams were the result of the sensations had from this mild form of stimulation. A gummed slip placed upon the sole of the foot caused a dream of dancing. Why did it cause a dream of dancing? Perhaps because of a similar antecedent sensation arising from the sole of the foot after dancing. At least there was some association between the ideas as a result of the test stimulus and others had from some previous experience.

Stroking the hand of a sleeper with absorbent cotton has produced a dream of a cow licking the hand. A bottle of asafetida held to the nostrils brought dreams of a dead horse. All the excitement of dreams, however, does not originate externally. Many dreams are directly caused by strong subliminal stimuli, such as aversion, fear, and hope. These are very often firmly planted in our subconscious minds, even though we may not be consciously aware of them. Some experience of childhood, which cannot be objectively recalled, in later years may frequently produce fearful dreams. Certain elements associated with the original incident will always appear in the dream.

A young and innocent boy became at one time almost guilty of an act of sex perversion. Several years later, the full realization of his near act dawned upon him. The memory was very revolting to him. There was also the fear that such inclinations might be latent within him; though, in fact, they were not. He consciously abhorred and avoided all conduct which might reasonably lead to or be construed as improper sex relationships. The aversion became more than normally established in his subconscious

mind. It became a deep-seated *fear*. Frequently he would thereafter have dreams of revolting sex acts, the very conduct toward which he had such a strong aversion. During sleep any internal or organic stimulation which might arouse sex ideas would immediately cause dreams, having the nature of the fear complex.

Let us take the specific case of the brother of this frater who has addressed our Forum. The brother is a pharmacist. He has dreams, as we are told, that he is in his store which is crowded with waiting customers and he is unable to serve them. This man is undoubtedly very conscientious. He has striven to build his business upon the foundation of excellent service. He has abhorred having people waiting unattended for a long time, causing them eventually to leave unserved and dissatisfied. He has felt that this would be a great blow to necessary public good-will. Such a state of affairs was one he was, in all probability, striving to avoid. He was ever concerned lest this circumstance come about. Certainly, too, in a pharmacy cleanliness is a trade mark of the profession. Carelessness in cleanliness might suggest *negligence*, and this, in turn, would be damaging to the reputation of a pharmacist in whom accuracy is essential. It can be easily understood, therefore, that this pharmacist was most exacting in the cleanliness of the utensils used in making up prescriptions. These thoughts became habits of fear, deeply implanted ideas of concern within his subconscious. Any stimulation, external or internal, which would cause a chain of ideation related to his store and his profession, while he slept, would obviously cause dreams of these latent but dominant fears.

As to why such dreams recur, they cannot fail to do so when the elements of which they consist are continually aroused. Most thoughts that we have are complex. They are made up of a compound of many simple ideas. Sometimes we do not realize all the ideas which enter into a thought that we have. A thought may consist of the simple ideas of colors, tastes, and sounds, or a combination of these with other ideas, as the result of reason and reflection. Take the idea of a *church*. If it is analyzed, it may be found perhaps to consist not only of the visual ideas of the edifice itself, its belfry and its Gothic windows, but of the sound of its bells, the

heavy perfumed scent of flowers mixed with an odor of varnish, and the mustiness of a place not properly ventilated. Consequently, any sense stimulation, which may be related to one of these ideas of the church, would cause the *whole* idea to recur as a dream embodying the church. One time the stimulus might be merely the sound of bells; another time, a scent, similar to that of an association.

Why are most dreams unpleasant? This has been one of the problems of psychiatrists and psychologists. I think we can advance a logical theory, but confirmation by future experimentation is needed. That which produces the greatest emotional reaction makes the most lasting impression in the subconscious mind. This is an established fact. Fears, aversions, and profound hopes are accompanied by deep emotional impetus. This in itself will result, in most instances, in having dreams that are unpleasant. Where the desires are the instigation of dreams, the dreams are frequently pleasant, because they concern the satisfaction of the desires.

Again, as said previously, dreams consist of a low order of integration of ideas. This means that the ideas are not united in a consciously rational manner. Consequently, the elements of the dream are often distorted, unnatural, and therefore, unpleasantly disturbing.—X

(Reprinted during absence of the Emperor)

Air Pressure in the Nostrils

A member from Florida asks whether he was correct in understanding one of our monographs to the effect that the rise and fall of tides affects the air in every locality and affects our nervous system in such a manner that in breathing through the nose we can tell whether the tides are high or low. The statement in the monograph in this regard is absolutely correct. A little experience on the part of every member living near such waters as rise and fall in tides will show that if one stands still and in a normal manner closes the mouth and takes deep breaths through the nose, one will find that one of the nostrils seems to take in more air than the other. In other words, there are times when one or the other of the nostrils seems to be more open or permits more air to enter it and go into the body. By inquir-

ing regarding the tides one will soon be able to determine whether the left nostril takes in more air or less air when the tides are in or out, and the same as to the right nostril. I have talked with many men who are constantly on the waters, and they have said that they have noticed this but have no explanation for it.

We must remember that man is essentially a water creature. He is composed very greatly of water—nearly eighty percent of his weight being water or moisture. He is born in water and loves to live in water or near it, throughout his life. He is now gradually evolving toward being a perfect air animal but still retains many of the qualities that belonged to him when he was wholly a water animal or nearly so. For this reason his nostrils are constructed in some way to enable him to adjust his breathing according to water and moisture conditions and the magnetic effects that produce these changes in tides or changes in the atmosphere. This is a matter which is interesting for experimentation, and opens up a very wide field for speculative thought if nothing more. But remember in your experiments that with one person it may be the left nostril that seems to breathe more freely when the tides are high, while with another person the left nostril may breathe more freely when the tides are low. Or it may be that a person living in certain localities will have the same identical experience. These are matters which have not yet been definitely determined.

(By Dr. H. Spencer Lewis—reprinted from
Rosicrucian Forum of June 1936)

Accidents and Suicides

I want to have a serious talk for a few moments with all of our members, and I hope this appears in the Forum magazine for everyone in our large circle of Forum members to think about. Recently one of the larger magazines (*Ladies Home Journal*, June, 1935) published an article with the headline "Accidents Don't Happen—They Are Caused." I want to speak about accidents and suicide. It would seem at first thought that these two things do not go together, but you will find that most accidents are as deliberately created in our lives as are suicides, and that by our actions day by day we are virtually bringing suicide into our

lives. When persons walk across the busy highways of the cities or the country and unheedingly step into automobile traffic without caution and without good sense, it is equivalent to committing suicide.

I wish our members would think of just a few figures in connection with this matter and perhaps talk about it at the family table as one of the interesting subjects for dinner discussion. Speak of it in the Sunday schools, the public schools, the church and everywhere. Let us all work together to warn ourselves and others of the sad condition that exists in this country.

During the year 1934, every fifteen minutes of every twenty-four-hour day throughout the whole year saw the sudden transition of a man, woman or child through accident. Think of a great clock high above our country ticking away the minutes and as each quarter hour of the gong struck, a man, woman, or child paid the penalty for our recklessness in traffic. In no other nation in the world and in no other time and through no other system of man-made ways of living has there been such a sacrifice of human life. At the end of several years, it equals the loss of life in the greatest wars. We are all united in trying to prevent wars but we think little about the slaughter of human life through accident and carelessness.

In every family of three persons—that is, father, mother, and child—the law of averages of the present time takes one of the three in accident. In other words, if there are three in your family or three in your neighbor's family, you can count upon it as almost a certainty that before very long one of the three in your family or one in the neighbor's family will more than likely pass through transition in a horrible period of suffering as the result of a terrible accident.

It is a terrible toll that this country is paying for its madness—its madness in many things. It is not only madness in our wild rush with automobiles to get around in the quickest possible time; it is not only madness to rush through the highways of the country at the greatest speed possible with the utmost indifference to traffic signals; it is not only madness to attempt to cross the streets in front of these madly rushing vehicles; but it is madness to drink or to allow others to drink intoxicating liquors and then

let a half-sober, half-sane, half-intelligent body sit at the wheel with one foot on the accelerator and mow down the human figures before it like a huge machine mows down the stalks of rye and wheat. It is madness to go to the seashore, the mountains, the valleys, the lakes for a day's outing, and stay late in the evening and then attempt to hurry home in the darkness; it is madness to return home on congested and crowded highways and attempt to make speed with safety; it is madness to try to keep apace with the fast-rushing life all around us and forget that every fifteen minutes one of us must drop to the earth mutilated, disfigured, and destined to pass through transition at an untimely period in our lives.

It is an absolute fact that 99 percent of the accidents in traffic are preventable. All means of prevention, however, include the cooperation of both the driver of the car and the pedestrian on the street. Every means that has been devised to cut down the number of accidents depends for its success upon the cooperation of parents as well as children, upon young and old, and upon those who are the deliberate murderers and those who are the victims.

A large portion of the automobile and traffic accidents are due to someone's becoming incompetent at the wheel or starting out in an incompetent condition generally through alcohol or the drowsiness slowly produced by alcoholic drinks. Make it a law in your family, with every member of your family and with all of your friends, that not one of you will enter an automobile if anyone who is to drive at all or conduct the car in any manner has been drinking. And if you find anyone driving on the highway or streets of your city or town who has been drinking report it immediately to the nearest police officer or warn the one who is about to drive or is driving to hesitate for his own sake and for the sake of others. In every part of the country more stringent laws and rules should be adopted, and those who are found driving while under any degree of influence from alcoholic liquor should not only be fined and arrested but their driving license should be taken away for one year. If people must be crazy enough to put themselves under the influence of liquor even to the smallest degree, they should stay at home

and go to bed and not risk the lives of others as well as their own.

Teach your children to be very careful and remember that while you are listening to or reading what I have said here, the clock has slowly moved on to the next fifteen minutes and another person somewhere in your neighborhood has been struck down or someone in an adjoining city has been killed and one family of three has been reduced to two. Let us all unite in fighting this unnecessary evil in our midst.

(By Dr. H. Spencer Lewis—reprinted from
Rosicrucian Forum of August 1935)

Houdini, the Magician

A number of our members have written to us from various parts of the country stating that the young Houdini, eminent stage magician and entertainer who is attempting to take the place of the elder Houdini in the amusement world since his transition, has made many kind and pleasant references to the A.M.O.R.C. and its activities in various cities where the question has arisen. In some cases persons have said that Mr. Houdini's very kind comments have left the thinking persons wondering whether the A.M.O.R.C. was an association of great Magicians or whether there was some other reason for Mr. Houdini's comments.

The original Houdini, who made himself famous throughout the world for many years as a master magician and unique character with astonishing abilities, was a member of the Rosicrucian Order in Europe. I do not know whether this younger Houdini is a member of some foreign or American branch of the organization or not. But we can thoroughly understand why Mr. Houdini would say the kind things he has said about AMORC, and we want to thank him and state that we appreciate his kind thoughts and kind remarks. While I hope that every one of our members who can do so will go to visit any place where Houdini is giving an exhibition of his work, and will praise him in the proper manner for his exhibitions, I hope that no one will attempt to get in touch with him and ask him for any references or favors merely because he has a kindly attitude toward AMORC. Do not do anything or say anything at any time that would lead anyone to think that you are

making use of your membership in AMORC to secure preferences with persons who are before the public and earning their livelihood in this manner.

(By Dr. H. Spencer Lewis—reprinted from
Rosicrucian Forum of June 1936)

The Change of Appearance

Soror Messer of Iowa rises in our Forum now to ask how and why it is that certain persons seem to change in their appearance as you sit or stand looking at them. She says that often in the presence of a group of persons and sitting quietly they suddenly seem to be standing in front of her appearing more aged or younger and often dressed differently, even to wearing poor and worn clothing or having on silks and satins, while as a matter of fact the person is still seated in his or her chair across the room and has not even moved.

Now this is an interesting matter that is easily understood by the members of the higher degrees and is difficult to explain to those in the lower degrees, but the fact is that the personality or, shall we say in this Forum discussion, the psychic self of the individual, projects itself or leaves the physical body and ventures into space across the room and this psychic self or inner personality is often of the previous incarnation or of a previous period of this incarnation and shows the individual as he once was—either younger in this incarnation or older in another one. Such projections can be wilfully made and are sometimes unconsciously made when a person is in a relaxed and concentrated mood.

As to how these projections can be made wilfully, deliberately, and systematically, I can only say that the matter is treated in detail in the higher degrees and is not something that can be discussed in this Forum or published in our Forum magazine; first, because it could only be properly understood by those who have the previous lessons and experience, and second, because it would take more time and space than we can devote to any one subject. In fact, it covers a large number of monographs in different parts of the upper degrees.

(By Dr. H. Spencer Lewis—reprinted from
Rosicrucian Forum of October 1934)

Sanctifying a New Home

Occasionally members have written to us stating that they are about to move into a new home or new house, or that they have just built a new home or house and wish to have some form of ceremony for dedicating and sanctifying it.

We do not have any special ritual or ceremony for such a purpose, but it certainly is an excellent idea and should be carried out by every real Rosicrucian. I would suggest that the Sanctum be one of the first things completed in the house, so that on the occasion of moving in permanently for the first night's residence therein, and after everything else is placed within the rooms and before the first hours of sleep are at hand, the member go into the Sanctum and in a prayerful attitude and with burning incense and lighted candles ask the Cosmic to bless the home and everyone who is to live within it and to permit continuous peace, happiness, health, and prosperity to reign in that home. I would then go into each and every room separately and slowly and reverently, while standing and holding a burning candle in the room, utter a prayer to the Cosmic to bless that individual room and its occupants. I would then return to the Sanctum and offer a prayer of thanks and appreciation for the blessings already enjoyed and for the privilege of having this new home or new dwelling place.

Such a method of sanctifying the home and thanking God for everything in it, and that may occur in it, is the only proper way to dedicate a new home. It should be dedicated to the good service, good-will and love that will radiate from it. It should be dedicated to God's principles and universal service.

In many of the Oriental homes there is a custom of adopting rules and regulations for the conduct of the home and in all of these regulations about eating, sleeping, the conduct of business and pleasure, the first rule laid down is "God is the first law." That should be the attitude of the Rosicrucian. Everything that is planned in life in connection with the new home or in connection with the individual should be considered from the principle that "God is the first law."

This would mean that God and God's principles and ideals would be given consideration before everything else. If the Rosicrucian concept of God is carried out and God is looked upon as being loving, kind, merciful, just, the kind Father of all human beings, and as the real Father of the home, and if it is understood that God loves smiling and happy countenances and approves of joyous music, singing, frivolity, fun that is clean and wholesome, and likes everything beautiful or colorful, sunshiny, peaceful, and uplifting, the home can be made a place of attraction and an inducement to young people and others to stay within its walls and find all of the great joys and benefits of life.

Such a home should have among its other pictures on the wall certain inspiring productions of the Great Masters as lift the thoughts upward. In the midst of all of the modern and foolish music of the present time, there should be some of the good and inspiring music of the Great Masters of the past, along with some of the simple, sacred melodies and folk songs that quicken the pulse of human experience. There should be flowers when they are available, plenty of sunshine and fresh air, a reverential attitude each day in the appreciation of the blessings of life, a thankfulness for life itself, for sleep, for physical activity and ability, for the food and water, and for all of the great inventions that have been inspired in the minds of men and which contribute to our conveniences and comfort.

There should be the occasional reading of sacred thoughts whether from the Christian Bible or other books. Once a week at least a paragraph of *Unto Thee I Grant* should be read to all assembled with a few minutes' discussion of its meaning so that it may become fixed in the mind. Some of the thoughts expressed by Jesus in the New Testament should be analyzed in the same manner. If the members of the home are members of any one of the Christian denominations, the principles of that denomination should be emphasized from time to time. If there are young members of the family, they should be sent to Sunday School or some school of sacred and spiritual thought. If the members of the family are associated with any other

denomination or religion than Christian, their religion should be maintained.

One night of the week should be set aside for the Rosicrucian Sanctum hours and for study, experimentation, prayer, and concentration. No one should be allowed to visit the home that evening or during such a period except those who are attuned with and in sympathy with the Rosicrucian work. Sunday should be held sacred in regard to material activities, but there should always be song and music that is uplifting and inspiring, for God does not intend us to maintain a pious attitude of despondence or of sadness.

Just as the sun laughs and sparkles on the waters of the brook and sings with the music of the spheres, so there should be a joyous lilt in the heart of every Rosicrucian all the time, except when he is impressed with the sorrows of those around him and sympathizes with them. Even then he should try to bring a note of hope and cheer into their lives. Avoid in every way a false religious attitude or anything that is hypocritical. Do as you believe is right to the best of your understanding, but seek light and guidance in that understanding so that if you are wrong you may be corrected in your attitude. Do not assume an attitude that is not genuine and do not make the mistake of thinking that lip reading of the Bible and lip service in prayers constitute a truly religious attitude.

Make your home of that quality and nature that God and the Great Masters might step into it at any moment unannounced and find you prepared and worthy of meeting them. Make your life so that if any moment of it is the last in this incarnation, the thoughts in your mind, the motives in your heart, and the spirit that animates you, will be such as you are ready to carry across the borderline into the kingdom of Heaven. In this wise, you will make your home one continuous dedication to God and the spiritual world, and you will be living the life of a real Rosicrucian.

(By Dr. H. Spencer Lewis—reprinted from
Rosicrucian Forum of December 1934)



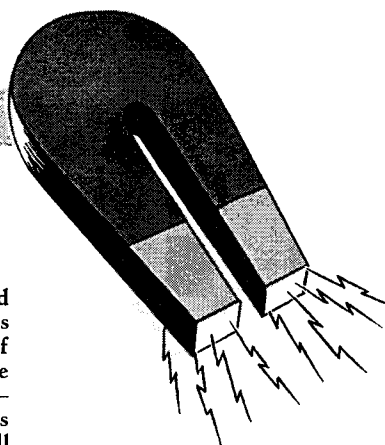
The PASSION of MATTER!

The Cosmic Influence of Magnetism

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No. 3

Carolings

A consciousness attuned to light
Hears joyous carols in the night,

The clear-toned bells of many chimes
That ring in lands of many climes!

And too the bells one seems to hear
Are from no earthly tower near,

But have their towers and their stairs
In elevations of fine prayers!

—V. Bruce Chilton, F. R. C.

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FOR MEMBERS ONLY

Greetings!



WHAT IS YOUR MISSION?

Dear Fratres and Sorores:

It is an old axiom that "Life is to live." This is not to be strictly interpreted in the biological sense—that is, to be but animated or merely to vegetate. To the human being, to live is to be *dynamically purposeful*. The animal, in propagating his kind, has fulfilled his biological function. The human being, however, cannot deny the attributes of reason and his moral impulses. Man considers the producing of offspring as but one attribute of his complex natural powers.

The intellect must live as well as the body. To live, the mind must be active; it cannot stagnate. A mind which continuously employs reason only for the furthering of physical existence is retrogressing. It is being placed in competition with the instinctive drive of an organism for self-preservation. The intelligent man sees himself as possessing a hierarchy of powers, the mind as superior to the body. The latter is but the vehicle of the former. Health is basic, for thereby the mind may be set free upon a course of its own choosing. The mind, the will, must facilitate health by disciplining the physical self. However, if it is continually bound to concern for the physical welfare, it loses its status of superiority and independence.

The intelligent being, as man, is able to discriminate and to analyze his own self-consciousness. He sets the ego, the self, apart from all else, from the world and all it contains, of which he is conscious. There begins, therefore, early in life a process of evaluation of everything in relation to the self. Each experience is appraised as to its contribution to the *satisfactions of life*. These satisfactions or pleasures are graduated. Some are purely physical; others are those which gratify the intellect or the moral sense of right-doing. Consequently, life becomes purposeful to the human being. The individual seeks to create those conditions which, in his experience or opinion, will result in satisfactory living. The *creative mind* is

one that desires to master its environment, to direct it and its elements as it prefers. The artist, the musician, and the writer are those who visualize a thing or state which they hope to objectify, make a reality. They do this because they conceive or know that such things will afford them personal satisfaction. Even the one who creates the seemingly impersonal does so because he desires intellectual or moral satisfaction from so doing. The leader who, in good faith, endeavors to change the thoughts of a people or bring about a transition in society is doing so because of a creative impulse. What he brings forth may not always be appreciated as progressive or constructive by others; yet it is motivated by the creative impulse.

A mission in life, then, is a purpose toward which the individual conceives that all his powers and functions should be directed. It is rather an all-inclusive *ideal* in comparison to which all other interests and objectives are to be subordinated. This mission, or all-inclusive ideal, will vary with the education of the individual, his aesthetic tastes, and the environmental factors to which he is exposed. One who was denied by circumstances the opportunity of an education and believes himself thus handicapped may think it his mission to adequately educate his children. Another whose moral sense may be offended by the conventions and conduct of modern society may be convinced that his mission is to bring about a reformation in the moral standards of his time.

There is no universal mission to be pursued by all mankind alike, unless one thinks of this mission in the broadest of philosophical and mystical terms. It is, of course, the mission of every human being, mystically, to put himself consciously into *oneness* with the Cosmic. This is done by harmoniously relating one's objective finite life with the Infinite Order or what is said to be Cosmic Law. Such an interpretation is too broad to be universally accepted. It must be reduced to those components which lie within

the understanding of the individual. In other words, the general ideal must be analyzed by the individual in terms of what it may mean to him. Thus, if the universal mission of mankind is to be construed as the advancement of mankind, then each individual must, within the scope of his ability and understanding, have as his particular mission that which he believes will further mankind. Some may comprehend this to mean active participation in charities; others may feel their work is in educational programs; and still others, in children's welfare, world peace projects, movements for cultural expansion and the like.

Most of us know what our mission in life is because it is that which we enjoy doing the most and which represents likewise the highest aspects of our being. As said, the individual, whose whole activity is devoted to sensual pleasures is damning his other capabilities. His potential mission in life is circumvented by the more finite functions of his being. Those who cultivate the *expanded self*, that is, the interests of an enlarged self, and who concentrate upon them, have a worthy mission. Anyone whose personal activities, for example, bring happiness, understanding, and comfort to others to any extent, is pursuing a worthy mission in life.

Unfortunately, there are many individuals who labor under the impression that there is a pre-determined or pre-destined mission for them. They conceive it as being Cosmically ordained. They do not know its nature but are certain that it must transcend the homely simple missions that others pursue. Working with cultural groups, educational or charitable societies, or mystical bodies seems too mundane for them. It is their belief that they have been singled out for something spectacular, mysterious, or unique. Consequently, they pass by all other missions which bring satisfaction to other people. The things which other people pursue, to them do not seem purposeful living. They devote themselves to a search for something that does not truly exist. Forget the idea of a specially ordained mission in life or the belief that there is a universal one whose content has eluded you. Analyze those ventures or pursuits that bring deep satisfaction to you, no matter how humble they may seem, and which cause you to

have a sense of rectitude. What conscience tells you is a noble and unselfish pursuit and from which you derive a profound sense of well-being, that, then, is your *mission in life*.

Fraternally,
RALPH M. LEWIS,
Imperator

Psychic Sounds

We have an interesting letter from Frater Baum of California, which constitutes a good theme for our discussion this morning, calling to our attention something that members frequently mention in their reports and letters. It relates to sounds of a psychic nature that often come to our members while they are asleep at night or in a very relaxed state, or on the borderline of sleep. He says that at times, especially after midnight, and generally between one and four o'clock in the morning, he has heard his name called very distinctly, and that his more intimate name of "Rob" is called rather than Robert, indicating that it is a familiar contact of some kind. He says that the calling of his name awakens him, and upon instant recollection it seems as though it were a woman's voice, but after awakening completely and listening for more of the voice there appears to be nothing else, and the experience is ended. He says this has happened a number of times.

In addition to this he has been awakened by the sound of a telephone ringing. In such cases he awakens with a definite realization that it is his telephone ringing sharply and clearly in its distinctive manner, and yet after waiting for a long period it does not ring again. Then, it gradually dawns upon his consciousness that the sound of the bell was not precisely that of the material bell itself, but of a psychic representation of it, or that it was produced in a different manner. He says that this, too, has occurred a great many times, and other members of his family have stated that they do not hear the ringing of the bell.

Frater Baum states that he is not frightened by any of these strange occurrences, but merely wants some explanation of them.

First, I want to say that sounds that are produced psychically or through Cosmic principles very often have such an excellent resemblance to natural sounds produced in a

material way that it is difficult to distinguish quickly between the psychic sound and the actual, material sound. I have in my Sanctum a very wonderfully made piece of glassware, in the form of a little bowl, that I picked up in Europe after testing a number of them. It is so balanced in its form and structural nature that the slightest little tap upon it gives a very beautiful bell sound, and yet it is so excellently balanced in its electrical and atomical structure that psychic vibrations of almost any kind, especially directed by the mind or extending from the rays of the hand, will also cause the glass to give off a ringing sound.

I have kept this little glass bowl well protected. Often during my psychic experiences with members, after placing it on a piece of velvet or velour upon my Sanctum altar so as to give it a cushioned foundation during my concentration periods, I have heard this delicate glass bowl ring a number of times. And while the tone or pitch of the tone is always the same, and is almost equivalent to the correct vibrations of the pitched tone of A in the first octave above Middle C, still the strength or amplitude of the tone varies very often. In other words, it is as though sometimes something struck the glass very sharply and strongly, and at other times delicately. On some occasions I have placed this little glass bowl on a cork so that it would be perfectly balanced, and if anything struck its side it would cause the bowl to rock on the delicately balanced support afforded by the cork. I have noticed on such occasions that when some loud notes were produced Cosmically or psychically on the glass bowl it would rock as though there had been actual physical, material contact with the bowl. At other times there have been softer notes produced without rocking the bowl the slightest degree. On some occasions I have placed a few ounces of water in the bowl and noticed that when a sound was produced in the glass slight vibrations like little waves traveled across the surface of the bowl, just as they would if the edge of the bowl had been struck with a pencil or some other device.

Some of my co-workers in experiments living at a distance have caused this bowl to produce a sound or a note at a definite time previously arranged, and when no hu-

man being was nearer to the bowl than eight or ten feet.

But a glass bowl of this kind is not the only object that can be caused to give forth a sound through Cosmic contact or psychic laws. For some reason that we have not attempted to analyze thoroughly, a telephone bell is very susceptible to psychic and Cosmic influence, and is often caused to ring when the person who produces the effect did not intend to ring the telephone bell. If you will examine the principle of the telephone bell, you will find that the little balls which strike the bells are delicately balanced in relationship to a magnet, and that it does not take much pressure of any kind to cause them to strike the bell and produce a sound. Whether the psychic energy flowing in waves affects the magnet and causes the bells to ring, or whether the psychic waves overcome the effect of the magnet and allow the bells to balance so easily that another form of psychic wave can cause them to strike and produce a sound, is a matter for further investigation. But the fact remains that the telephone bells seem to be very susceptible to such psychic influences from a distance or close at hand.

Certain piano strings in a piano will also hum at times from psychic influences. I have found that my cello when properly tuned and standing in the corner of the room will give off some harmonic sounds as though something of a very soft and pliable nature had pressed one of the strings and released itself and allowed the string to vibrate very softly. A Hawaiian guitar standing in the corner of my Sanctum for months also seemed to give off certain ringing sounds from one of the higher strings. Various other objects from time to time have manifested their susceptibility to these influences. And strange as it may seem, I had in a little art room adjoining my Sanctum a roller window shade that had the tendency to suddenly release the spring contact and wind itself up with great rapidity. During many psychic experiences with members I would pull the shade down to its full length and then at a formerly arranged minute of the hour the shade would suddenly rattle and slide up to its closed position.

This shade was tested in many ways. It was found that by rattling or shaking it when it was pulled down its full length

there was no more tendency for it to fly up and roll itself up again than any other shade, but on the other hand there was something about the catch on the spring that was so delicately balanced, or the spring itself was so attuned in vibrations, that the slightest psychic effect in the room or near the shade would cause it to rapidly wind itself up even if the person producing this effect happened to be many miles away and simply projected the vibrations.

Our members should not be surprised, therefore, that in experimenting with Cosmic principles, especially with the principles in the higher grades, various sounds may be produced at night or at unexpected times. The same is true in regard to human voices. Very often a voice will resound in a room that is typical of a human voice, and it will be in the nature of a name, or a command, or a call of some kind that is easily identified. Sometimes these sounds give the impression of a feminine voice only because of the pureness of the tone, and of course at times the effect may be produced by a female and not by a male. But we have not noticed in any of our tests that the psychic effects produced by females are any different in their nature than those produced by males except when a message or thought is definitely intended to express itself in the form of the human voice.

As to why these effects should be produced at night after twelve o'clock is another interesting subject for analysis. For several centuries the Rosicrucian manuscripts dealing with experiments have plainly indicated that more psychic effects were produced between two and three o'clock in the morning than at any other hour of the day or night. The next most effective hour appears to be between three and four, and the next hour is that between four and five. Taking the entire day into consideration it would seem that the arc of time from one o'clock in the morning to five, or up to sunrise, is the most successful and efficient. I have found from other statistics that this period of the early morning is also the time when a great many transitions occur, and when a great many persons in illness reach a crisis of their condition and a change for the better or the worse takes place.

Physicians have told me that from their experiences in hospitals and with patients

in homes, the vitality of the human body seems to be in the most passive, relaxed, and inactive state during the two or three hours preceding sunrise, and that immediately after sunrise a great change takes place in the vitality of the average body, and additional strength seems to come at sunrise, and if the person has not passed through transition before sunrise, there is little likelihood that transition will occur until near noontime or in the afternoon, and probably not until the following morning between one and five o'clock.

Other comments made by mystics and psychics and physicians in the past indicate that the positive vibrations of Nous and the positive magnetic conditions in the atmosphere around us are at the lowest potential or lowest degree of strength between two and five in the morning, or approximately around three o'clock. This applies to each and every locality where any person may be living, for three o'clock in the morning in one part of the world or one part of the United States is not three o'clock in an Eastern or Western part, and so the time is based upon the local sun time, or clock time.

It would seem to the average person that since noon seems to be the time when the sun is at its highest and greatest strength that midnight would be the weaker period of the day, but it is not true that the sun is at its greatest strength at noontime, even though it is at its highest point in the heavens. After all, the astronomical position of the sun is purely an optical illusion, for the sun is not close enough to the earth for anyone to say that at any one hour of the day it is directly over any one particular place of the earth. Furthermore, as the sun rises early in the morning, it begins to increase in strength and vitality, and in a few hours has reached as high a degree of radiation as it can possibly reach at any hour of the morning or afternoon.

In other words, so far as the sun rays and Nous are concerned, six or seven o'clock in the morning in any locality has brought to that place as much of the full power of the sun's vitality and Nous as it is possible for the sun to give, and throughout the remainder of the day up to the time of sunset the sun is maintaining almost an equal degree of vitalizing radiation. Certainly by ten o'clock in the morning the sun is radi-

ating its full vitality, and so we can see that between seven and ten in the morning in any locality the sun is giving forth its new and vitalizing power to the locality in which we live. The very opposite hours from these on the clock would be from one to four in the morning, and this may explain why the positive phase of the sun's power would fall in the morning from seven to ten, and the negative phase from one to four in the morning.

There is another point to be considered and that is that the average human being becomes more relaxed, restful, and more receptive during the early hours of the morning, especially from two to five. Even those who retire before midnight may rest the physical body to a great degree before one o'clock in the morning, but it is not until two o'clock in the morning that the average person has become completely negative in rest and in the operation of many functionings of the body, and therefore in a deep degree of relaxation. This is the period of the morning when most persons sleep very soundly, and it is perhaps because of this deep relaxation and the lessening of the sun's vitality that so many transitions occur at this time.

But this same relaxed, negative condition of the individual between the hours of two and four, or one and five in the morning, makes each individual more receptive to the positive psychic vibrations that may come toward him. We must consider all psychic vibrations as positive in their potential nature. If this is so, then we can understand that such waves of positive energy or vibrations would travel more easily through the negative atmospheric conditions of the early morning hours than during the daytime when the atmosphere is so heavily charged with the positive vibrations of the sun. Positive vibrations will more easily flow or travel upon sound through a negative condition than through a positive one. I believe we have an excellent demonstration of this in the fact that radio waves will travel a longer distance and with greater strength each successive hour after sunset than during the sunlight of the day. Such radio emanations are positive, as sent out from the broadcasting station, and ride easier and more efficiently through the negative atmospheric conditions and magnetic condi-

tions than through the positive of the daytime.

(By Dr. H. Spencer Lewis—reprinted from
Rosicrucian Forum of June 1936)

Postal Regulations

The higher cost of living, necessitating salary increases to postal employees in most of the nations throughout the world, has resulted in a very substantial increase in postage from the United States to foreign countries. The United States Government is a member of what is called the Postal Union, which Union includes Latin-American countries, the British Commonwealth, and the like. This increase in postage to the countries of the Postal Union amounts to an additional 60 percent on all AMORC overseas mail.

Now, this is a further burden which AMORC just cannot assume. It may seem that several pennies more on an envelope is not a big item, if one is considering only one letter or one monograph. However, when this is multiplied by thousands of pieces of mail weekly, it amounts to many thousands of dollars annually. It is *not* the intention of the Grand Lodge to increase the membership dues to compensate for this postal increase. Other arrangements will have to be made.

It has been decided that in the future all monographs being sent to members, with the exception of these members residing in the United States and Canada, will need be sent by *third-class mail*, instead of first-class. This plan will materially reduce the postage costs. However, third-class mail does not arrive with the same degree of regularity as does first-class mail. There is usually a period of three to four days, or even a week's delay in delivery. This delay can be offset by AMORC's extending in advance to each member overseas an additional monograph at the time this change is put into effect. Consequently, each member will have one monograph in advance to hold over for the *following* week; during the interim, the other monograph will have reached him. In other words, having one monograph in advance, such members will not be delayed as a result of the slower transmission of the third-class mail.

Since this will result in a considerable saving of postage costs to the Grand Lodge,

it wishes to pass on some of this saving to the fratres and sorores overseas. Whereas now only three monographs a month are forwarded to these members, with this new plan, *four* monographs, or one each week, will be sent. I am sure that our fratres and sorores will be pleased by the increase in number of monographs sent to them, and also in knowing that this method will greatly assist the Grand Lodge of AMORC which has been burdened by numerous administrative increases.

It is interesting to note that in 1927, twenty-six years ago, members in the United States were paying monthly membership dues of \$2.00. Today, in the United States and Canada, their dues are \$2.75, which is an increase of less than 33 percent. On the other hand, statistics show that present-day general costs of commodities and services average about 150-165 percent over those of 1927! So, AMORC's increase in dues throughout the years has been *substantially less* than the general increases of all other things. In operating, AMORC has to pay all of these higher costs. Thus, we are taking this measure with our postal changes to avoid increasing dues.

Domestic mail, or mail in the United States traveling first-class, has not yet been increased though there is a threat to do so. Consequently, mail to members in the United States and Canada will continue to go first-class, unless there is a postal increase there, as well. If that does happen, then the third-class mail plan will need to be adopted for them also.

Before making this decision, overseas members were contacted for their opinions. Of course, not every member was questioned, but the Grand Treasurer, Frater James R. Whitcomb, who accompanied the Imperator on a journey to lodges and chapters overseas, recently brought these matters to the attention of members in the principal cities in Australia and in South Africa. The members realized that it was the only thing to do and encouraged the Grand Lodge to proceed with its plan. The exact time when this change-over will go into effect has not yet been established. It is very likely to be started in the next thirty days, or possibly by the time you are reading this article. However, each overseas member who will be so affected will receive a full notice of ex-

planation with the first monographs going to him as the result of this change.

It is to be expected that problems will arise in certain countries in connection with this change in mailing. Of course, these cannot all be anticipated. We will work for their solution, with your cooperation, as they arise. Just as this article is being prepared, we have been notified of another serious postal increase affecting our publications, such as the *Rosicrucian Digest* and the *El Rosacruz*; the postal rate on them has been tripled. We are not contemplating, however, any change in the mailing arrangement of these Rosicrucian periodicals, and there will be *no increase*, of course, to our members.

We are calling these matters to the attention of our members, and especially those who live outside the United States and Canada, because our arrangement does affect them in a favorable manner. They will receive more monographs than they now do. It is our wish also that you know some of these problems with which the administration—your officers of the Grand Lodge—are confronted in these changing times, and to let you know that we are thinking of your interests.—X

Is Smoking Harmful?

A frater now asks a question which comes frequently before this Forum, though in various forms. He wants to know: "What is the effect of the use of tobacco on the psychic self? How does it affect one's spiritual growth?"

The broad answer to this query would be that that which has a detrimental effect upon the physical being inhibits the normal functioning of the psychic self and one's development of the higher or spiritual consciousness. The whole question as to the effect of smoking upon health is now receiving serious consideration by physicians and research institutions. These physicians and research bodies are not prompted by any fanatical moral precept. With them, it is not a question of smoking's being a moral wrong, but rather its depositing of dangerous impurities into the lungs, and thus in the blood stream. The general public concern about smoking is the result of several pronouncements by medical physicians and

pathologists working independently. They have stated that, in their authoritative opinions after considerable clinical tests, smoking contributes to *lung cancer*. This is a bold and, of course, alarming statement. Only the reputation of the researchers warrants considering such a declaration.

There is statistical record, which cannot be refuted, of the startling increase, especially in men, of lung cancer. This appalling malady could be, and undoubtedly is, caused by numerous factors as, for instance, the polluted and contaminated air in large industrial cities and where automobile traffic has become extremely heavy. What cannot be overlooked is that the increase in lung cancer seems to be proportionate to the increase in smokers. The effect of this publicity has been to seriously decrease the sale of cigarettes in the United States recently, notwithstanding the intensive newspaper, radio, and television advertising. The very nature of cigarette advertising at present in the United States and Canada indicates that the manufacturers are trying to combat the findings and announcements of the therapeutic researchers. The copy of their advertisements is mainly directed to showing how the particular manufacturer's brand "filters out all the harmful ingredients in the tobacco." This is, in fact, a tacit admission that the tobacco smoke, when inhaled, can be harmful because of injurious chemical properties, unless this or that is done to remove them. There is also some question as to the accuracy of claims of eliminating the harmful ingredients.

Some of the manufacturers have even taken the positive stand that their product is good for the throat, clearing the nasal passages, and so forth. That much of this advertising may be false and misleading is evidenced by the fact that it is reported that the Federal Trade Commission of the United States is to investigate such claims. Where this advertising is found to be false, a "cease and desist" order will be issued to the manufacturer with severe penalties for violation.

A sad commentary on the avarice of some commercial enterprises is that certain of these cigarette interests are protesting the researchers' announcements of their findings with respect to smoking and lung cancer. Certainly, if the manufacturers are allowed to set forth their claims of the innocuous

effects of smoking on health, then likewise physicians and therapeutic clinics should have equal right to publicize their conclusions and findings on the same subject.

If—and we emphasize *if*—for we do not take a stand on this controversy which as yet is undecided, smoking is harmful to the health, it will restrict the psychic functions. Extremely poor health, such as the malady (lung cancer) claimed to be due to smoking, would place the psychic faculties and objective self out of harmony with each other. The objective self would be so negative that all the positive energy of the psychic power would be diverted to an attempt at rehabilitating the destroyed tissues. The pain or resultant suffering would make one insensible to the finer impressions or psychic impulses from the psychic centers and sympathetic nervous system. True meditation, necessary for attunement with the higher aspects of *self-consciousness*, which we call the psychic, would be most difficult. When one is ill, it is difficult to relax sufficiently to become conscious of the subtle psychic impressions.

What would be the effect on the *spiritual growth* to which the frater refers, if heavy smoking eventually does affect the health in the manner claimed? A brief consideration of what is meant by spiritual growth is necessary to answer this question. Ordinarily, this means conformity to one's moral dictates or what is commonly called *conscience*. It means behavior which stems from a sense of rectitude which the individual believes brings him into closer attunement with the God of his Heart. Spirituality is thus objectified in one's habits and character. To some of us, spiritual conduct as interpreted by others seems fanatical. However, whatever a man does in accordance with his most noble and divine promptings is conceived as spiritual to him. The way in which he acts is *not* divinely prompted. His actions are in conformity with his education, his intelligence, and his environment. If one's health is seriously affected, he is not able to think as clearly or to have that illumination which amounts to spiritual growth.

Let us make one point clear. Whatever you do to your body can in no way contaminate the divine essence of your being. It is impossible for one to degrade the soul essence. Fortunately, such is beyond the

reach of our somatic influences. However, ill-health can and does restrict to a great extent the flow of the psychic and divine power, such as inspiration or intuitive ideas, into the objective consciousness. Rather, we should say that serious illness can prevent one's having consciousness of the transcendent aspects of self. To better understand this, let us use a homely analogy. No one's blindness can change the symmetry of a rose, its beautiful form and shape, or the wave bands of light which it gives off and which are realized as magnificent color by one with normal sight. Blindness does, however, prevent one from being conscious of these qualities of the rose.

From the Rosicrucian point of view, there is no immoral or sinful quality attached to the habit of smoking, as is often proclaimed by religionists. These persons declare that that which is sought for pleasure in itself, which satisfies an appetite and which is not absolutely essential is, consequently, a vice. From their point of *reasoning*, that which is sought as pleasure must always be of a spiritual or divine quality. Such is absurd and unnatural. The body must have a harmony of its feelings or we have distraction. With distraction, contemplation and meditation upon spiritual values is impossible. These same religionists, who renounce smoking, will, for example, seek out a comfortable chair because of the ease and pleasure it affords their body. They will embellish foods with spices because this enhances the flavor and adds pleasure to their eating. In fact, they enjoy confections which are not essential either to nourishment or health. There is, therefore, no evil content in seeking pleasures unless they destroy the body, inhibit the mind, or menace society.—X

Recognize the Humanitarian

Two general types of news dominate the press today. The first is *crime*. The criminal is both individual and organized society. There is the thief, the murderer, on the one hand; and, on the other, there is the outlaw nation that defies all decency and dignity in its tyrannical oppression. The behavior of these criminals is sensational and commands reader interest in the press of the world. The second general type of news is the acclamation of spectacular events and

personalities. These personalities may be called *heroes*, *prominent industrialists*, or others whose activities have a particular appeal to the imagination.

Unfortunately, entirely unsung or perhaps given only mediocre space in the daily journals, are those men and women who have contributed to the welfare of humanity in simple and less spectacular ways. Their kindness and sacrifices, their desire to help and to advance mankind often goes unnoticed. In many instances their services for humanity are more far-reaching than those of the personalities whose activities have commanded several columns in the local press, and a photograph as well. These other persons perform their multitudinous deeds for neither reward nor fee but merely because they are prompted to do so for love of their fellows.

What are the deeds these *true humanitarians* perform? They may be instrumental in establishing nonsectarian youth centers in their communities to keep teenagers off the streets; they may help to organize care for unwed mothers and their children. Perhaps they give considerable time to victims of the alcoholic habit or carry on educational campaigns in various ways to arouse public interest in mental hygiene. These people, humble and often unheralded, are the fabric of any *real civilization*. There is no glamor surrounding them, nor any medals, waving of flags or playing of bands to acclaim their accomplishments.

How much worse would society be if it were not for the percentage of such self-sacrificing people in each community? Most of us do not have the time, or preferably *won't take the time* to do what they do. Indirectly, we hear of their work, sometimes through some *inconspicuous* article in a newspaper or journal. We then nod our heads approvingly as we read, but do we let them know what we think of what they have done? They are human. Their satisfaction is not just in a job well done. They would like to know that others admire and respect them for their unselfish accomplishments. Some recognition would inspire them to greater attainment. If they learn of our approval, they then would know that they have our moral support.

The Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, is a humanitarian organization. We are striving

to enlighten mankind, to advance society, and to make the world better because man has lived. It behooves us, then, to encourage all true humanitarians, whether Rosicrucians or not—and regardless of race, nationality or creed. In line with this principle, about a year ago, we prepared a certificate of recognition to be conferred upon all whom we call "Humanists." Every man or woman who has performed some outstanding service in his community—a service which displays an impersonal desire to alleviate suffering or generally to raise the moral standing of society—has received that small but beautiful certificate from AMORC. Accompanying it is a personal letter, commenting upon the achievements and stating that, as a humanitarian organization, AMORC honors the recipient as a *Humanist*. These certificates, issued both in English and Spanish, have been presented to worthy individuals throughout the United States, the British Commonwealth, and the Latin-American nations. Fine letters of appreciation, expressing happiness in being so recognized for their undertakings have come from almost all of those who received certificates.

How do we learn of these Humanists? Our fratres and sorores have advised us. At first, we asked only a limited number of Rosicrucians, as for example, our District Commissioners, to suggest the names of those who met our qualifications for such recognition. Now, we ask *every Rosicrucian* living anywhere to inform us of any man or woman whom he or she thinks has so served humanity recently as to warrant this meritorious certificate as a Humanist. Here is how you may help:

(1) In reading your daily newspapers, note any act, no matter how small, of any individual who is conducting any cultural, charitable, or otherwise unselfish service for humanity, and who lives in or near your city. Do *not* select those who are paid employees of some institution carrying on that type of work, or clergymen whose duty it is to perform such acts.

(2) Send us the individual's complete name and address, also all particulars available to you as to the service he is rendering.

(3) This information, of course, may be obtained from other channels to

which you have access, such as radio announcements, television programs, periodicals, bulletins, etc., that are brought to your attention.

(4) Do *not* provide names and addresses of persons who are distinguished in the performance of their *regular* occupation or profession. We want the names of those who are doing things that go beyond the scope of their usual obligations, jobs, etc. It is one thing to make good in your trade or profession, but it is still another to do something in addition to it, or from which you could expect no corresponding benefit. The latter are the true *Humanists*.

Any names you send from time to time will be acknowledged to you, as well as the forwarding of the certificates and letter direct to the individuals themselves.—X

Catholicism vs. Rosicrucianism

It is necessary at times, in the defense of *right* and of *freedom* of speech and thought, to make unpleasant circumstances public. The Rosicrucian Order throughout its long history, and especially in modern times, has not been a sectarian fraternity. It advocates no particular form of worship of the deity. It leaves worship to the individual conception of God had by the member. It urges the Rosicrucian to affiliate, if he can do so with justice to his own conceptions, with some church of his preference. The Rosicrucian Order expounds no dogma or procedure for the salvation of the individual, again leaving those matters to the varied realms of theology. It pays homage to no single messiah or religious founder, again recognizing the right of the individual to evaluate the virtues of each of the traditional adepts of the numerous living world religions.

The Rosicrucian Order, as a philosophical movement, has long contended that a universal religion is not possible unless there be also a universal spiritual awakening and comprehension on the part of humanity. A man's religion cannot transcend the level of his spiritual consciousness and the breadth of his mental vision. Thus, each individual gravitates to an objective expression of his subjective spiritual inclinations. Each religion serves in its way those who gravitate to it. Consequently, as Max Muller, the

famed ethnologist, has so succinctly stated: "There never was a false god nor was there ever really a false religion, unless you call a child a false man."

With this tolerant attitude, the Rosicrucian Order has had cross its threshold, in almost every land, thousands of men and women of nearly every religious sect and an equal number who had no church affiliation. Obviously, many of our philosophical doctrines are contiguous to subjects also embraced by religious doctrines. This in no sense has made of the A.M.O.R.C. a religious body. For analogy, almost all the leading universities and colleges have courses in comparative religion and yet such are not religious institutions. A comprehensive study of Western and Oriental philosophy would embrace topics which also approach those of the religious domain and yet schools of philosophy or university courses in the same cannot be correctly defined as religious institutions.

It is to be expected that the Rosicrucian consideration of such subjects as morality, conscience, ontology, and related topics would not be compatible with the views of some of the religious sects. If our doctrines were to parallel or in every respect confirm those of some religious sect, obviously, then, there would be no need for the existence of the Rosicrucian Order—or of any philosophical organization. Where our concepts have differed from theological views, it was an honest difference of opinion not intended to attack, criticize, or deride the views of others. We can say with assurance and with pride that the Rosicrucian Order has never, in its manuscripts issued to members, in literature for public consumption, or in any of its periodicals, attacked any religious movement or group.

Down through the centuries, the Rosicrucian Order has been the victim of persecution by the Roman Catholic Church. This persecution has taken the form of false and misleading articles by the Church, through its religious orders, appearing in periodicals, pamphlets, and newspapers. Though some of the periodicals were not published in the name of the Church, they were journals approved by the Church. Almost all such articles were signed by clergymen of the Church, from priests to bishops, and by members of the Society of Jesus.

The majority of such literature purports to admonish the Catholic layman about the evils and dangers of Rosicrucian membership. What is malicious in connection with such activities is not their disapproval of Rosicrucianism, but rather the distortion of facts, constituting absolute falsehoods.

The Jesuit Society, which prides itself on being the intellectual spokesman of Catholicism and which has access to reliable sources of information, is most guilty in its attacks on the Rosicrucian Order by presenting a fabrication of misstatement. It is generally conceded among persons with a normal sense of justice that the suppression of any fact, which alters the statement being made, constitutes malice aforethought. The Roman Church literature on the Rosicrucian Order and its activities, or that issued in its name, is replete with such omissions. As a result the Rosicrucian Order, we say, is *intentionally* placed in a false light to Roman Catholic readers who accept the Church's literature as authoritative and accurate.

Every organization, cultural, philosophical, and religious, has its enemies—of this the Roman Church has personal experience particularly in Communist countries. The Rosicrucian Order is no exception. Individuals and groups have maligned and vilified it. Their charges have been as acrimonious as they have been unfounded. The Roman Church or its spokesmen have seemingly delighted in taking these malicious and mendacious charges and publicizing them as though they were facts. It has published allegations by individuals which have never ventured to a court of law. It has made such charges appear as *current events*. To Catholic readers it would seem as though the matters were pending and, further, as if the Rosicrucian Order had been proved guilty of the charges. There would be no mention of the defense made by the Rosicrucian Order in repudiating the charges—even though such information were readily accessible from the same sources as the charges.

In other instances, critical and sensational attacks made in isolated periodicals upon the Rosicrucian Order have been published in Catholic literature. No mention was made of the fact that the attacking periodical had gone out of business years ago and had failed in any way to substantiate its charges.

Recently, a new series of such attacks has been made upon the Rosicrucian Order without justification, except that the Rosicrucian Order exists. The attacks are beneath the level of principle and decency of any Christian sect. They are more what would be expected of an unscrupulous merchant who was envious of what he thought to be a competitor for his clientele. It is most amazing that the Roman Church, which is itself crying out in alarm to the world about its *persecution by Communism*, indulges persecution of others in its own name. In the democratic countries, as the United States, the Roman Church, in its public proclamations, would appear as a staunch supporter of democratic principles. It speaks of bringing back to the countries behind the Iron Curtain religious freedom—it prays that it may once again flourish in such countries as Czechoslovakia and Poland. Conversely, however, the Church *viciously attacks* the Rosicrucian Order in those very democratic countries in which its own freedom has been assured by Rosicrucians and non-Catholic citizens.

Also in some of this literature by the Roman Church in which the Rosicrucian Order is the principal target, there is an assiduous polemic to prove that the Rosicrucian Order is a religion. It is pointed out that, regardless of our statements and our traditional history, we are nevertheless a religion. Having then come to that conclusion, *they condemn us*. In other words, in the West where *religious freedom* is a dominant precept of all the constitution of those countries, we are attacked because we are thought to be a religion. Is it not rather inconsistent to advocate the need for religious freedom in countries dominated by Communism and, on the other hand, for the Church to make a vice of what they conceive as our religious difference?

We have consistently refused heretofore to acknowledge these attacks—which are increasing in number—but feel that our members should now hear the other side. In literature issued by the Roman Church all Catholics who are members of the Rosicrucian Order are threatened with excommunication, for to be a member of the A.M.O.R.C. is marked as a *deadly sin*. Whether having an open mind and receiving truth wherever it may be found is a sin, the Catholic must

decide for himself. He may be free in his thinking or be restricted to predigested opinions issued by medieval authority, whichever he prefers. We cannot, however, remain silent when, accompanying such attacks, are false statements about the history, purposes and functions, of the Rosicrucian Order. We have never attacked those of a different opinion but we will always be militant in our own defense as long as the prevailing laws of the countries in which the A.M.O.R.C. flourishes, tolerate freedom of conscience and expression of opinion.—X

Three Phases of Rosicrucian Philosophy

We can apply the law of the triangle to many things, and basically also to the Rosicrucian teachings. They are, after all, the foundation upon which we try to build a personal philosophy. We must necessarily contribute to that basis or else it would have no particular value for us insofar as an individual application of the teachings is concerned.

Readers of the *Rosicrucian Forum* and students that have carefully studied the monographs hardly need to be informed that the Rosicrucian teachings have three specific phases—the intellectual, the practical, and the psychic. In many courses of study, in many systems of thought, and in many forms of teaching, one or two, or even occasionally all three, of these factors will be found, but it is within the philosophy of the Rosicrucians as it has been devised in our monographs of the present time that a practical application of these three phases has been utilized and the ability of the individual to comprehend that which is taught is made possible through these three channels.

It is not a new concept for us when we repeat that fundamentally these three factors must enter into the composition of the individual's mental outlook. Or, to put it in another form, these three factors are what brings about a philosophical and mystical concept within the consciousness of the individual. It is impossible to eliminate any one of them. There are many people who try to do so; they try to base their whole concept of learning, their whole basis of belief or experience, upon one or two of these factors, thinking that it is unnecessary to follow through and to apply all three. Actually, balance is needed; it is essential

that each of the principles and each of the things which contribute to the particular concept involved in each be applied specifically to the individual enabling him to grasp that which he wishes to attain.

The first of the concepts, the *intellectual*, is of course, to a great extent, fundamental. We must learn a great deal from all that we are able to grasp in consciousness through the physical sense faculties. In other words, it is necessary for us to bring into the objective consciousness much of the knowledge that we are to utilize in any form. The gaining of knowledge is fundamental to any system of thought or philosophy. This includes language—the formulation of words into phrases that make sense. Intellectually, we must grasp the principles that are taught to us, mainly as they have been devised through the experience of other individuals. Without the intellectual background, we would be unable to even read the things that other people have studied and have put into a form which we may be able to grasp more quickly than we could if we had to formulate the whole system ourselves.

Therefore, while everything upon the intellectual level is purely in the sphere of the objective and something to be primarily learned in the objective consciousness, it is no less important because of its objectivity. Objective knowledge is important because we must grasp it insofar as consciousness is concerned.

Second to the intellectual concept is the *practical*. The practical phase of learning applies to experience. What we may gain in the intellectual sense becomes worth while only insofar as we are able to utilize it. Our acquisition of knowledge is not of itself anything to be used for a purpose that may bring benefit or enjoyment to us. The practical application or use of that knowledge is what makes it effective in the life of the individual.

Intellectual factors, therefore, have no value until they are applied. Knowledge in itself is worthless. It is conceivable that we could memorize great units of knowledge and yet be unable to do anything with those same units unless we made the effort of putting them into use.

Intellectually and practically, the human race has advanced to a high level. When we consider the youth of the country, those

who graduate from high schools and colleges, and see the tremendous amount of intellectual material and the practical application that has been made of that material, we realize how effective our modern system of education has become in equipping the average adult with knowledge and the means for its utilization.

But if we are to give our attention primarily to a philosophy, to a practical psychology of life, or to the understanding of those principles which are on the basis of a mystical concept, it is important to go a step beyond the intellectual and the practical. The final grasp of a philosophy of life, the inner development and growth of the self that is resident within consciousness, comes through a third factor which is neither complete in an intellectual sense nor can it be completely utilized in a practical sense until it is felt. This factor is the process of *psychic* development, and it is through the feeling that comes in the utilization of man's emotional experience and abilities that he is able to intimately make as part of his own consciousness those things which intellectually and practically may be drilled into him through a system of instruction.

It is what we know and what we are able to utilize potentially that contains all the attributes of those things which contribute to the necessities of life in the physical sense; that is, the knowledge and the use of that knowledge makes it possible for us to earn a living, to drive a car, to enjoy ourselves, or to do anything that requires knowledge and experience. The possession of knowledge and experience has meaning and inspires confidence, happiness, and peace of mind. There must also enter into or be added to consciousness the feeling that comes to the individual when he is able to encompass within his own being those factors which cause him to realize that there is more to life than the mere accumulation of knowledge within the mind and the application of that knowledge as it applies to the physical world in which he lives.

The emotions are as much a part of the human being as are the physical senses or the physical organs of the body. We change everything that comes into consciousness through the influence of the way we feel about things. Even what we learn is modified by how we feel, and our ability to learn

is definitely modified by our approach and feeling toward any new idea or subject.

It is through the process of ritual and initiation that the psychic factors of the Rosicrucian philosophy become known to us. We have stated many times, and will probably do so many times in the future, that the Rosicrucian teachings, the monographs which constitute the form in which we receive the teachings, could be read repeatedly and continuously by any intelligent adult and a certain amount of intellectual and practical knowledge be gained, but that which changes the individual from a mere machine, learning by rote or fixed knowledge, to an individual who senses that he is on a different level from the physical animal or on a level above a mere accumulation of intellectual facts is due to the feeling that accompanies the knowledge which we are able to learn and to apply. This is best expressed by the performance of ritual.

Ritual tends to bring into the consciousness of the participant or to him who witnesses the performance of ritual all the emotional overtones, all the feelings that come through seeing the grandeur of pageantry, the perfection of trained movement and activity. When these activities present allegorically certain principles that the individual is trying to achieve, then ritual, in all its forms, becomes an initiation in the sense that the individual's consciousness is lifted above the level of a mere acquisition of knowledge and is put into effect.

Purely objective or material things need be approached only in the intellectual fashion; that is, we can conceivably exist successfully and cope with the various principles of the external world if we have the proper objective and intellectual capacity and knowledge to deal with them. But when we wish to go beyond anything of a purely objective or material nature, when we wish to raise our consciousness to a point where it may come in contact with principles and conditions that lie beyond the material world, then comes the realization that the intellectual and the practical are not enough. The most intelligent individual that ever lived, the individual most efficient in the use of that intelligence, cannot solve the problems that eventually confront every individual at some time in life.

Spiritual or psychic evolution requires the

emotional approach to all problems. It is through the emotions that we become personally able to experience those things which raise us above the level of a mere intellectual entity and give us the basis where we can, through other mediums of perception, gain an outlook that goes beyond the view of the physical senses and carries us into the concept that is encompassed by Cosmic Consciousness.—A.

Is Intuition Reliable?

Here are two fratres, one in Canada, and the other in the State of Washington, rising to ask similar questions. The frater in Washington says: "I would like a clarification of the matters of intuition, impulses, the Voice of the Guardian, and reason."

Then, the frater in Canada asks: "I would like to know if one's intuition can answer any question asked? I have been practicing exercises for developing this intuition and it seems to be working less accurately than when I first started."

From the broadest, metaphysical point of view, intuition is synonymous with Cosmic, or Universal Mind. This expounds that the Universal Mind as an Intelligence, permeates every cell of our being and is thus accessible as an infinite wisdom. From this contention, if one is capable of making contact with this sublime source of knowledge, he has an infallible guidance. Continuing further with the metaphysical conception of intuition, it is held that all things are all-potential in the Cosmic Mind, and are of it. Therefore, there is nothing conceivable by man that is not already a perfected reality existing in the Cosmic Mind. Consequently, by referring to his intuition, he would here have an answer to any question, even if the elements of the question did not have any correspondences in the objective world.

This conception of Cosmic Mind and intuition, though fundamentally correct, does need further qualification or the student is likely to become confused by failure in practice. The Cosmic Mind does not contain within it all the particular things or details of human knowledge and experience. It does not consist, for example, of a vast reservoir in which all technical terminology and facts may be had as one would find in a textbook dealing with a specific subject. In other words, the Cosmic Mind must not be com-

pared to an invisible library of source information. When referring to, or seeking intuitive guidance, it is not comparable to consulting a book upon a shelf, a book in which would be found the complete knowledge we desire.

For analogy, we may liken the intuition to a superintelligence or higher judgment. It does not contain the elements of human experience, the particulars of some science or art; but, rather, it is an exalted form of evaluation. It determines for us whether our reasoning is sound and it confirms it if it is so, by a sense of conviction. It likewise inspires, and the result is what we call *hunches*. These take the form of a reorganization of our ideas or conceptions, a new association of thoughts which has such *self-evidence* that they impel us to action, and in the majority of instances result in success.

For better analysis of this functioning of intuition, we will liken it to a human counselor to whom one may refer regarding some technical problem. Perhaps one has two plans in mind for a certain enterprise. His reason is unable to convince him sufficiently as to which plan is proper. So, he confers with this wise counselor. The latter looks at his plans and selects one, advising him that this is the proper one. The counselor does not necessarily go into a long explanation as to how he arrived at his selection or conclusion. One is content to accept the counselor's conclusion upon the basis of his authority. So, too, it is with intuition.

For further analogy, one may have a problem for which he has no solution. He goes to a learned technical adviser; the adviser listens to the explanation of the difficulty. He then may say that this, or that, should be done. What he relates may not be completely a new knowledge to the one who consults him. It may consist of things already known but which had not been related to the problem at hand by the one who consulted him. Consequently, the one who sought consultation is left to work out the details himself. He has had suggested to him how he may marshal his own ideas and experiences so as to compose an effective plan. Again, we say, so also does intuition function.

Reason must precede intuition in most instances, and must follow it as well. If we

were to resort constantly to intuition without referring to our reason, this latter faculty would soon atrophy. It is part of our psychological process that intuition rarely functions without reason first having been applied. It appears that reason stimulates the latent subconscious processes of the Cosmic Mind within us. It is only when reason labors without success and is finally temporarily abandoned that the unfinished work is carried on by the subconscious processes of the Cosmic Mind, or intuition. It is like referring a legal question to a higher court for an ultimate decision. When intuition floods the consciousness with illuminated ideas, reason is required for its subsequent, intelligent application. Since intuition is an exalted or super kind of judgment, obviously it would not oppose any rational procedure for its application. One cannot abandon good common sense in putting into effect the intuitive ideas.

There are those who say: "My intuitive ideas were completely counter to my reason. If I had followed my reason, I would have failed." This is true only when reason has failed and intuition takes over. *If* reason had been correct in its conclusions, one would not have a counter idea through intuition. Of course, one can obstinately shut out intuition or fail to heed its impressions. Thus, one may be working on a problem, trying to rationalize it, *which we should do*, and suddenly there is flashed into consciousness a conception which discloses that the reasoned idea is erroneous. One may be obdurate enough to insist on his objective conclusions, completely abandoning the more lucid intuitive impressions. In such instances, of course, one would fail.

It would seem that intuition is the function of superior reasoning, a more profound faculty that transcends the finite reasoning. Intuition can correlate, associate, and project ideas which are given it in a much more effective manner than can reason. It is also apparent that a *pre-work* must be accomplished by reason. Intuition will not begin with an unformulated conception. It must be set into motion by the sincere effort of *conscious thought*. Then, it proceeds to find a harmonious relationship between ideas, and it is for this reason that intuitive ideas seem so self-evident and arouse no doubt.

Unless one has really labored with reason

upon a problem, it will not stimulate his intuition. Petty matters which are not of great concern, or which just arouse our curiosity, will not evoke the intuitive processes. At times the individual will confuse thoughts arising out of his free association of ideas with intuitive impressions. He may follow these thoughts, only to be disappointed; he may wrongly conclude as a result that intuition has failed him. Thus, a person may be thinking of a particular problem and a *different* idea will come to the fore of consciousness. He immediately concludes that this new and different idea is intuitive. It may be ineffectual, and he having believed that it came from intuition, thinks that intuition has failed him. An intuitive idea is not just that which is different or even one which suddenly appears on the horizon of consciousness. The true intuitive idea may be truly likened to illumination. The mind is freed of all doubt. It is *suddenly* enlightened. It is instantly relieved of tension. All other thought upon the subject not only appears radically different but erroneous by comparison. There is such clarity associated with the intuitive impression that it imbues one with absolute conviction. Unless your impressions are of this kind, they are not from an intuitive source.

Intuitive impressions may be called at times: "the voice of conscience," "the inner guardian," "the Cosmic Mind," or, "the unfinished work of the subconscious mind," but in effect, these are all of the same procedure. —X

Self and Selflessness

Each conscious entity strives toward the realization of self. By this we mean that every entity that thinks tries to understand its own existence. Someone who has given considerable thought to the subject of self and its position in life and environment has asked whether this process of attempting to realize self could, in the final analysis, be the real purpose of life; in other words, is it true that we live primarily for the purpose of realizing our own being?

The most complex of all psychological factors is that which is included in self. The whole of the study of psychology concerns the relationship of an entity, that is, of a self, to its environment. Also, it concerns the means by which the entity relates itself to an environment, as well as the continuity

of reason that is established within the existence of the self. In a sense we might say that self has to be related to self. This, upon first examination, does not seem to make sense, but a little analysis makes us realize that every thinking human being is making an attempt to reconcile his own thinking to his own aspirations, wishes, hopes, or desires. All of us live with the hope to succeed in an understanding of what our situation in life is, what we are here for, and how we can best accomplish that which we believe to be a worthy aspiration.

To become completely familiar with that which is in us or makes us an individual entity, the "I" that we refer to ourselves as being, is a long step in realizing the purpose of existence and the ultimate end or destiny of all being. In the consideration of self and selflessness, we must not necessarily interpret these two terms insofar as they might apply to selfishness and altruism. These concepts do not necessarily fit into the psychological discussion of self and selflessness. The word *selfishness* is taken from the word *self*; or, rather, it is a modification of that word, having to do with an entirely different behavior pattern or system than does the psychological realization of self as a developing and conscious entity.

It is difficult to isolate self. When we refer to self, we think vaguely of the whole pattern constituting the consciousness within our own being at the moment. The mental content of our mind, the attitude, the character, the behavior that makes us what we think we are in the sense that we are individual entities is all included in what might be referred to as self. Self, then, is a word which encompasses such a vast complexity of behavior, of thinking, of memory, of the various patterns making up the totality of individual existence, that it is little wonder that the word has been given different interpretations by almost everyone who has ever attempted to define it. Regardless of the viewpoint with which the word is approached, be it psychologically, religiously, philosophically, or purely biological, there exists no definition of self that is acceptable to all points of view.

At any conscious moment, we are aware of self. We are incapable of realizing how consciousness would be possible without self. Regardless of where we may be or what we

may be doing, in the center of consciousness, even though not necessarily always at the center of attention, there is the awareness of the existence of self. Everything that we perceive, our every thought, or in other words, every change that takes place in our minds is related to the existence of self. We live as individual self-units, consciously or unconsciously, measuring every phenomenon, or occurrence, in terms of that self because, after all, it is the thing in which we are the most involved or interested.

There is danger of overdoing this. We can live to the point where self becomes so much a conscious burden to us that we can think of nothing else. As long as we are so involved in self that we cannot take into consideration anything else, nothing very important can happen to us or nothing of significance can occur in our environment that will add to our pleasure of living or to our general advancement.

Selflessness is a state of being in which one does not consider himself as the most important factor in existence or as the center of the universe. Because we are normally so conscious and aware of self, we seldom think of selflessness aside from an absolute state of dreamless sleep or a state of unconsciousness. We are constantly placing emphasis on self, and obviously everything that we do and everything that we consider is in those terms. If we approach the subject of self and selflessness from a mystical rather than from a purely psychological viewpoint, we may cast some light upon the subject of whether or not self should have the continued undivided attention that it so frequently has during the time that we are conscious entities, or if it should at times be subordinated to a secondary consideration.

The self is referred to in many sacred writings. In some it has been made an important factor in the development of the individual human being or consciousness. In others it is referred to merely in the sense of being another or a synonymous word to take the place of "I." The religious and mystical interpretations vary greatly in various places and at various times. Just as psychological terminology is always subject to the viewpoint of the individual using it, so the word *self* is used in different ways.

There is an interesting tradition, or it may be a myth, concerning self and selfless-

ness related in the *Chandogya Upanishad*. In this ancient document the story is told of two individuals who sought to realize *self*. This story is somewhat of a parable in the sense that it is similar to the parables of the New Testament with which Christians are so familiar. The story tells of two individuals who came to a teacher with the idea of gaining a full understanding of self, and thereby be able to find their place and purpose in life and in the universe. The story tells that when they first approached the teacher, who was to guide them, they were enthusiastic; and, as any student might be, they were primarily concerned with becoming teachers themselves once they learned the truth of self in the human scheme of things and how the self is related to the Absolute or to God.

Their teacher instructed them to go to a lake and look at themselves in the water. They did this and reported that all they saw was their reflection. Then the teacher told them to put on the finest clothing, the finest things that they owned or to which they had access, and look again in the water. They did this and, of course, saw themselves adorned in the finery which they had been able to assemble for this purpose. They were impressed because their reflection was that of all the glory which they physically, or at least financially, were able to secure for themselves.

And so, after admiring their reflections in this form, they left the teacher and set off to return home. One of the individuals, one of the students as we might call them, was completely satisfied. He believed that he had found the self, that the self is the reflection of our physical entity, that this bodily self could be decorated, be enhanced, and made great and wonderful, and therefore it could be worshiped. His message to the human race would be to adorn the self, to satisfy the physical needs of the body, to satisfy its cravings and its appetites; and, in so doing, man would gain that which he sought.

Enthusiastically he repeated these ideas to the second student, but more and more the second student thought about it and realized that what the first had learned might not be quite true. In fact, the second student said, "As this self seems to be well adorned when the body is well dressed, so too will it

be blind when the body is blind, lame if the body is lame, deformed if the body is deformed. This same self will die when the body dies. There is no good in this knowledge." The individual saw, or reasoned, that the self which was perceived in the reflection in the lake was no more than a temporary entity, one which was subject to the various vicissitudes of being and in which an individual could not find permanent satisfaction or gain.

So the second student returned to the teacher. The teacher was indulgent; he saw that at least one of his pupils had thought beyond the reflection of a physical object. According to the story, the teacher required him to live not far from his school for thirty-two years while he studied. During this time, the teacher instructed him in the various principles that would lead to a fuller comprehension of self. The teacher revealed to the student that in dreams an individual might find self, but the student came to the conclusion that this self too was not true since in its dreams it was still conscious of pain and pleasure; nor was the true self realized in sleep without dreams, since such a condition is the equivalent of annihilation, and annihilation of self would be of no value and would not contribute to realization.

But after further study, the second student came to a more important realization, and in the ancient scriptures we read, "This body is mortal, forever in the clutch of death, but within it resides the self, immortal and without form. This self through its association in consciousness with the body is subject to pleasure and pain, and so long as this association continues no man can find freedom from pain and pleasure. But when association comes to an end, there is an end also of pain and pleasure. Rising above the physical consciousness, knowing the self as distinct from the sense organs and the mind, knowing the Absolute in the true light, one rejoices, and one is free."

And so the second student came to realize that the real self is not a physical entity, but something that resides in the physical, and that only as long as the self is associated in consciousness with the body it is subject to pleasure and pain. When the association is ended, then both pain and pleasure end. These feelings, these responses to environ-

ment, are purely a measure of physical standards. And so, in the end, this student learned that "Having realized his own self, man becomes selfless. Through selflessness he has no part in pleasure or pain but attains absolute-ness."

Selflessness is the realization that we are more than what the objective consciousness causes us to seem to be. This means that as we are able to expand consciousness beyond the limitations of our objective mind, we mingle with the forces that reside on a plane higher than that of which we are familiar while physical human beings. Man is therefore body and soul. The body is physical; the soul is spiritual. The self is the consciousness of the physical body; the inner self is the consciousness of the soul. To attain dominion over this physical self is to expand our consciousness to include at least some awareness of the inner self. The inner self is a part of the force that transcends all physical being, and through it we can attain a degree of selflessness because of its relationship with that power or force which is greater than we as individual entities can hope to be in this physical universe.—A.

Rosicrucianism and Psychology

A frater from Florida now addresses our Forum. He says: "Permit me to bring before the Forum a subject I feel is appropriate in these times. To mention the subject of psychology today is to mention a spectrum, as it were, of psychological subjects. It seems to parallel the all-inclusive and most general term *science*, in point of definition at least. These facts prompt me to apologize in advance for what may seem a loose usage of these terms. Will you please make a comparison between psychology and Rosicrucianism from the standpoint of developing the mental and physical potentials of the individual?"

"Psychology says, 'Follow me. I will clear your beclouded mind of mental blocks, neuroses, complexes, repressions, aberrations and illusions, and your body of toothaches, asthma and constipation. Let me make of you a whole individual from your divided parts.'

"Rosicrucianism says, 'Follow me. I will show you the road to understanding the universe. And on this road there may be

found ways of developing your every potential and mastering the deterrents of your mind and body.' One course promises a method to educate the ego; the other, the way to illuminate it."

In my opinion, the frater has an excellent conception of the essential functions of both academic psychology and the doctrines of the Rosicrucian Order. The essence of the subject is to elucidate the relationship which Rosicrucianism and psychology may have to each other and the value of such relationship to man. Primarily, the purpose of psychology is a study of the human mind so far as its function is concerned. Psychology cannot fail, of course, to also include a working knowledge of the physiology of the nervous systems, the receptor organs, and the brain itself. Though anatomy and physiology are separate sciences, psychology leans heavily upon an understanding of the structure of those organs which are related to the functioning of the mind.

The normal mind is a statistical conclusion rather than an absolute pattern. It can only be arrived at by careful observation of a great number of persons under similar circumstances, such as the impact of more or less the same environmental factors. We know that certain influences adapt or *condition* one to a particular kind of behavior. Persons exposed to a like environment would, therefore, develop a norm of their kind. Such a "normal," however, would obviously not be consistent with the normal of a dissimilar body of persons. Psychology, nevertheless, must accept such averages and then determine what causes deviations from them. When the deviations are extreme, they constitute the mental blocks, aberrations, and neuroses to which the frater refers.

The norm might be advanced, the functioning of the mind accelerated, or at least not inhibited, if the conceptions had by the masses of the people were to be changed. The psychologist is not necessarily a philosopher, a theologian, nor a sociologist. It is not to be expected that he will enter into abstraction on what constitutes the ideal society, or the philosophical interpretation of good and evil, or the nature of the Cosmic and man's place in it. However, these conceptions do definitely affect the state of mind

of large masses of people. They produce a norm which often is the result of deep inhibitions by fears, arising out of religious misconceptions and false notions of life's values and relationships. Numerous persons have been greatly distracted, for example, by the fear of death induced by religious concepts. They have had severe guilt complexes for acts committed and for which they believe they cannot make adequate compensation until after death. In comparison with people of different mental views, these unfortunate persons may be said to be abnormal. Their minds are, however, not functioning properly if one takes into consideration the factors which becloud their thinking and unnecessarily agitate them emotionally.

It is the obligation, the avowed purpose of the Rosicrucian Order, as a philosophical fraternity, to disclose the false notions which thousands of persons inherit as religious or social traditions. There are many words which, standing alone without proper qualification, create illusions which confound and inhibit the individual. These misconceptions frustrate the individual. They restrict the full potential of his powers. These conceptions often descend to him with an aura of tradition and he may even believe it would be a sacrilege to renounce them. Psychology often includes among its teachers and researchers those who have not too definite an understanding of these very relationships, because they lie beyond the frontier of their own science. Then, too, these teachers and researchers are often dependent upon financial support from those very institutions or sources of our modern society whose expositions and notions are at fault. The remedy, then, so far as removing detrimental factors in human relations is concerned, must rest upon others.

The Rosicrucian Order, as a philosophical system, does not seek to concentrate upon a single field of knowledge or science. Its value is the unifying or the integrating of many factors. It seeks to coordinate all major human experiences. It desires to put in order man's understanding of his own ego, the world in which he lives, his obligations to his fellows or society, and to show him his dependence upon nature. It further

seeks to help man to form an intelligent healthful interpretation of his moral impulses. If these three, *God or the Cosmic*, *nature*, and *man*, are so related that the mind can move freely to a consideration of one or another of them and live in harmony with each of them, the task of the psychologist can then be made much simpler.

The Rosicrucian Order endeavors to show that the human ego is not confined to the immediate person, though its function lies there. The ego is an extension of Cosmic forces upon which man is dependent. What man is, even his personality, is a construct of the elements of the world in which he lives. It consists of that which is visible and invisible, animate and inanimate, finite and infinite. Further, the ego is not only dependent upon externalities but it also extends itself to create factors which may react upon it favorably or otherwise. Our thinking, our notions about ourselves and of the universe and God, *create conditions* that we have to live with. If they are fearsome, brutal or unrealistic, they return to us as unpleasant experiences and circumstances which mold our personalities and restrict the pleasure of living.

The Rosicrucian Order embodies many elements of academic psychology in its teachings. In fact, many topics included for years in the Rosicrucian psychology have only in comparatively recent times been accepted by "outside" psychologists. Our views with regard to these topics were at one time thought "too fantastic," "too speculative." Now they are confirmed by the modern research of departments of psychology in leading universities. These departments did not seek to vindicate the Rosicrucian teachings, but their parallel findings have proved what we have taught and have demonstrated. There still are several principles of Rosicrucian psychology which remain in the category of the "speculative" to our contemporary psychologists.

Psychology, as taught in the universities, is much more comprehensive than that taught by the AMORC. This is because their purpose is to present a *specialized science*, a single branch of knowledge. Much of what is so taught, however, would be of no practical value to a Rosicrucian member,

unless he sought a degree in psychology for the purpose of teaching it or practicing it. Only those elements of psychology which are necessary for the all-embracing philosophy of the Rosicrucian teachings are taught by AMORC. Those points essential for the Rosicrucian member's understanding of how his mind functions, in relation to the important experiences of life, are incorporated in the teachings. This same method is employed, for example, in our Rosicrucian teachings on biology. Enough of the development of life and the functions of living matter are taught to cause an appreciation of man's affinity with living things everywhere. To go beyond that would be, again, to specialize and also to deviate from the objective of coordinating human knowledge into a philosophy of living.—X

Grief at Transition

A frater of the Southern United States now says: "As a Rosicrucian, I am familiar with the laws of change—but why, in God's supreme wisdom, was it necessary to cause such grief and loneliness on the occasion of a loved one's transition? In the Divine scheme was it necessary? If so, why?"

"We are taught about the divinity of pure unselfish love but, mystically, we are taught that it is wrong to attach too much love to material things. Is it wrong, then, to have so much love for God's mansion of the soul (the body) as to cause such grief and despair in parting? Surely among the profane it must cause much uncertainty in their beliefs."

Grief at death is not instituted by God or the Cosmic, but rather it is a mortal weakness—and an entirely understandable one since we are human. We are given emotions essential to our feeling of life's relationships. In fact, without emotions man would have no spiritual or even moral impulses. As psychosomatic beings, we know that our thoughts can affect our feelings, emotions, and our physical well-being. Therefore, limited or negative views can emotionally disturb us by their restrictions.

Let us look at this question both from the philosophical and psychological point of view. Man is capable of a variety of *loves*. Regardless of the exalted poetic conception,

love is an impelling *desire*. It is a desire for that which will gratify some urge or appetite of our composite being. Thus, passions are a lower form of love. The scale of love advances upward in accordance with the more expanded self of the individual. All love is selfish. By this we mean, love is a desire for that which will satisfy self. In the lower order, love is limited to the immediate physical pleasures. Then it advances toward those things which affect that part of the self which it embraces as its own. The love of a mother for her child is not psychologically impersonal any more than a man's love for his dog. Even the sacrificing love for a friend is not impersonal. What we enjoy, what we want, acquires for us the characteristics of intimacy, of a possession. That particular object belongs to us; it is ours, it is part of our self because of our desire for it. We do things for our body because of the pleasure to the physical being; and we do things for the ego, because they provide us with confidence and contentment—or, in other words, a satisfaction of the larger self.

The love of Divinity, of a Supreme Being or God, is again a desire to gratify the highest and most extensive inclination or urge of the self. If, as religion and mysticism expound, the exalted self is the soul, then that which satisfies this aspect of our being, or the love of the Divine, is a *self-love*. There is certainly nothing detrimental in wishing to gratify an impulse that stems from the higher aspects of self-consciousness or soul. The Islamic mystics taught that man's love of God is God's love of Himself, for it is the Divine impulse in man that causes him to desire a union with the Infinite Mind. We have, then, at times conflicting loves or desires, even though some should in their relative importance be given preference over others. The love of one's children, father, mother, wife, or other members of the family is a desire to retain them in a possessing sense, as part of the self. They are essentially a part of our being, once a close love has been established for them, as are the limbs of our body. If we sacrifice our own existence for a loved one, it is only because we love that part of self best. In other words, we are moved by that desire more strongly than by the preservation of our physical existence.

In theory at least, if one's love of the Divine is profound and is accompanied by sufficient *illumination* of the Cosmic order, then no deep grief would be felt upon the occasion of the transition of a loved one. However, men are mortal; their illumination is not absolute. There is much which they do not understand. As a result, the severance of those bonds with loved ones, who are psychologically a part of themselves, results in grief. However, there are variations of grief or rather some forms of it may be prompted by different conceptions. One may, for example, grieve for the transition of a loved one because of fear and ignorance concerning the afterlife. He or she may believe that this endeared person may have to undergo some severe judgment in an afterlife and be subject to a great punishment. This grief then is partly engendered by the emotion of fear. Others may conceive the separation at death as a complete severance with the departed personality, a complete and final end; in other words, that there is a permanent loss.

There is also the more natural grief of the enlightened individual. Such a person has the usual emotional shock of separation from the physical and mental companionship of the departed, and from the earthly joys he shared with the loved one. This individual, however, knows that death is not horrible nor the end of the beloved. It is merely the radical change in the relationship that is causing his sorrow. Such a person's sorrow may be likened to the mother who sheds tears when her little boy leaves for the first day at school. She weeps not because she has lost a child but rather lost a baby for the child is now ascending toward manhood. She soon recovers and finds new happiness in her child's greater attainments. So, too, the one with mystical understanding grieves for a while the loss of the physical companionship but comes to find that he is bound even more closely to the memory of the departed personality. There is a tremendous peace in the quieting influence of that memory. He even comes to be happy in the realization of the great initiation which his loved one has experienced. Rosicrucian membership does not—nor could it—exclude sorrow for the transition of a loved one but it does make that grief much more

bearable and heals it rapidly with deeper feelings which supersede it.—X

Memory of the Soul

A soror rises to ask our Forum: "Does the soul consciousness make an extra effort to record certain happenings for the future, or possibly for the next incarnation? I have had this sensation a number of times which leads me to believe so. It is like the objective self which wishes to impress on the mind a certain picture for recall in the near future and makes an extra effort to do so by repetition if necessary.

"For instance, I lock the door. I can go out without unlocking it, but I cannot come back in without the key. So, I make a mental note to be sure to unlock the door before I go out; or, perhaps, I wish to keep the door locked. Then, I make a mental note to take my key with me. After a while each procedure becomes a habit.

"As to the soul consciousness, a happening occurred several times. Now there seems to be the wish to record it firmly, so it is brought to my attention again and again. That is why I am asking about the memory of the soul consciousness."

The psychological process of memory as a function of the organ of brain is mostly familiar to the average, educated person today. Though the process in part is still theoretical to physiologists and psychologists, nevertheless, it is generally taught and, for practical purposes, serves us. Various impressions received through our sense organs as sensations, and thence ideas, are recorded as impulses in the brain, not greatly unlike impressions recorded upon a magnetic sound tape. In the brain, the "tape" consists of neurons, or brain cells, whose electrical or vibratory field is altered by the impressions being received. These mutations, or alterations, of the memory cells are retained. It would seem that all new vibratory impulses which are of a similar rate or frequency to those which are recorded engender the release, or the transmission into consciousness, of the original memory impressions. Electronic calculators used in working out complicated mathematic equations function similarly. They use sensitized tapes and other

devices which, in effect, retain the impressions, sometimes indefinitely, and at other times for intervals of just a few seconds, as does the organ of brain.

All memory impressions do not originate externally, nor are they of our immediate existence. We may, in thinking and in reasoning, combine a series of simple ideas so as to form more complex ones or, at least, gain conceptions that have not arisen directly out of some experience which we have had. These, then, if forceful enough—that is, if accompanied by a sufficient emotional stimulus—will also impress themselves upon the memory cells.

In our Rosicrucian teachings, we speak of the subjective aspect of mind as being a "storehouse of memory." From that storehouse impressions find their way into the objective stream of consciousness from time to time. It is further said that consciousness itself retains memory. Let us quote a part of one of our Degree monographs: "Consequently, the center of man's life is poised between two worlds, and naturally open to both. It is, as it were, the point or moment between the mundane or Cosmic, having a memory of the former moment and being prophetic of the moment to be. In other words, the thread of memory permits consciousness to transport itself into the past and the thread of the imagination permits consciousness to sense, anticipate, or project itself into the future."

The question is: where does the subjective aspect of mind get its memory impulses if they do not all originate from immediate or objective experience? Many of the memory impressions are truly of *past lives* but can be explained by the natural laws of genetics or heredity. Biologists, through considerable controlled experiment and research, have learned that the *gene*, a small portion of the germ plasma of living matter, transmits the hereditary characteristics. This vital life force, with its divine consciousness, retains impressions which have been made upon it by one or many previous generations. Its intelligence or consciousness is mutated, altered or changed, by the impact of continuous vibrations of a specific kind. In the new organism to which these genes are transmitted, their characteristics influence its

physical, mental, and psychic construction. The offspring is thus strongly inclined toward the hereditary characteristics.

This *memory of the genes* is reflected not just in physical characteristics of the ancestors, but also psychologically. The individual may have vague impressions of dislike for certain elements of his experiences. This dislike he cannot trace to incidents in this life. He is perhaps greatly disturbed by certain music or colors, or even kinds of behavior, as though he had some previous unfavorable experience with them which he cannot quite remember. These memory impressions will continually recur under similar circumstances.

It may be said by some that such memory impressions are of physical or biological origin and are not associated with the soul-personality itself. It must be realized that our *soul-personality* is the aggregate of the divine consciousness or Nous, which is taken in with our breath, and the vital life force, which is transmitted to us by our parents. These two, the inherited consciousness of the cells of our organism and the Cosmic intelligence in the air we breathe, or the universal soul, fashion our personality. We react or continuously respond to the impressions of the divine consciousness and to the inclinations of our organic being, and to that extent we are a distinct soul-personality.

Needless to say, all hereditary memory impressions are not favorable. The organism may inherit characteristics which would best be suppressed, or changed by the exerting of our will; in fact *we can change* our inherited inclinations in many ways: by our thoughts, actions, and habits. In turn, we then transmit these new, *positive* mutations to our children. In our past life, there may have been, for analogy, a struggle between moral impulses—that is, the divine sense of right or conscience, on the one hand, and some somatic inclination or desire on the other. The higher consciousness may have tried to intercede, to guide us against submitting to these bodily inclinations which would have been to our detriment. This divine intervention of the soul intelligence may, or may not, have been successful; nevertheless, whenever in our existing life, events or circumstances occur which parallel those

of the original conflict, we will experience a strong memory impression of the conflict. Perhaps it will be in the form of an admonishment in consciousness—an order, seemingly from out of nowhere, telling us not to do this, or to do that. This admonishment would be so forceful and lucid as to be startling, as though it were spoken by another person, only of course we will realize that it is an immanent intelligence.

Such recollections from another past may also come as visual impressions which with most persons are not distinct. One may, on the screen of his consciousness seem to perceive a personality uttering the very words which he hears within himself. Or, he may seem to see in mind a scene where some incident, associated with the advice he hears, took place.

Many persons have had the strange, almost uncanny, experience in visiting a place to which they had never been before in this life to find that it was remarkably familiar to them. They even knew what to look for when inside of the dwelling which they had never visited before. They would then confirm their impressions of what they would find there. Others have proved this memory impression by referring to records on file in local government offices concerning the visited premises, or by consulting neighbors; they have found that what they seemed to know about the place, what they recalled, was actually true in fact. This is a kind of association of ideas. The actual experience of seeing the place arouses the memory impressions that have been recorded within the deeper consciousness and which have been transmitted by the genes. In other words, the experience arouses, by its connection, a memory of the soul.

Memory impressions of things we have seen or heard are more forceful or more easily recollected if they were originally accompanied by some emotional stimulus. Likewise, memory impressions of the *soul-personality*, or of the consciousness within our genes, are more easily recollected if they were forcefully recorded at the time. The frequency of these recollected impressions from the depth of consciousness depends on what we do or what we think—which by association will arouse them.—X

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